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KIDNAPPING IN THE SOUTH SEAS.

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KIDNAPPING

IN

THE SOUTH SEAS

BEING A NARRATIVE OF A THREE MONTHS' CRUISE

OF

H.M. SHIP ROSARIO

56983

BY

CAPTAIN GEORGE PALMER, R.N. F.R.G.S.

EDINBURGH
EDMONSTON AND DOUGLAS
1871

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00056983

TO

THE OFFICERS OF H.M. SHIP ROSARIO

THIS BOOK IS INSCRIBED

IN AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCE OF THE MANY PLEASANT MONTHS

PASSED IN THEIR SOCIETY ON THE AUSTRALIAN STATION,

AND OF THE UNVARYING ZEAL ALWAYS DISPLAYED BY THEM

IN THE DISCHARGE OF THEIR DUTIES,

AS WELL AS

THEIR HEARTY CO-OPERATION IN P[illegible]TING THE DISCIPLINE

AND COMFORT OF THE SHIP.

PREFACE.

The following pages are written with the sole object of exposing the deeds that have been perpetrated among the beautiful islands of the South Pacific, by men calling themselves Englishmen, and whose transactions have been invariably carried on under cover of our glorious old flag.

Few have either time or inclination to wade through Parliamentary Blue-books, or unravel the mysteries of Royal Commissions and Select Committees, but should any of my readers have sufficient leisure to do so, they will find ample evidence to show that, although our Government has remonstrated against certain transactions that have for some time past disgraced our name and flag in those seas, the time has arrived when something more must be done.

These proceedings will shortly be brought before

Parliament, and some of the correspondence moved for is already on the table of the House.

Much information has been withheld in the following pages, so as not to weary the reader; therefore the events related are principally confined to the cruise of H.M.S. 'Rosario' among the South Sea Islands.

G. P.

EDINBURGH, *March* 1871.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE

From Sydney to Noumea, New Caledonia—Pets of the 'Rosario'—French account of the proceedings of English vessels, ... 1

CHAPTER II.

French Government model farm—M. Joubert's sugar estate—Convicts, ... 13

CHAPTER III.

Aneiteum, New Hebrides—Migrations of the Polynesian race, ... 23

CHAPTER IV.

Tanna, New Hebrides—Yam feast—Native dances, . . . 32

CHAPTER V.

Ascend the volcano—Interview with natives—Eccentric proceedings of some English traders, ... 41

CHAPTER VI.

PAGE
Erromanga, New Hebrides—Man-stealers *versus* Missionaries: who will win the day? 54

CHAPTER VII.

Vaté, New Hebrides—Hauling the seine—Leave for the Fijis, ... 65

CHAPTER VIII.

Ovalau, Fiji—Instances of white civilisation—Visit Bureta and Wai-dau—Question natives from Kingsmill group, 75

CHAPTER IX.

Exciting life of Her Majesty's consul for Fiji and Tonga—How things are managed in the Fijis, . . . 90

CHAPTER X.

Arrival at Levuka of a Queensland passenger vessel called the 'Daphne'—Detain her on suspicion of being engaged in an irregular traffic tending to promote and encourage the slave trade, ... 104

CHAPTER XI.

Coral reefs of Ovalau—Thakombau and Ratu Abel, . . 115

CHAPTER XII.

Amusing scene at the Water Police Court, Sydney—What constitutes kidnapping? 128

CHAPTER XIII.

PAGE
Trial of the 'Daphne' in the Vice-Admiralty Court of New South Wales—Its result, ... 142

CHAPTER XIV.

Story of the 'Young Australian,' another passenger vessel—What is slavery? 153

CHAPTER XV.

The Australian press on the working of the Queensland "Polynesian Labour Act" of 1868, ... 166

CHAPTER XVI.

Exploits of the old sandalwood traders—Novel contrivance for filling up a passenger vessel by means of a bishop's broken leg, ... 182

APPENDIX A.

Letter from Sir Alfred Stephen, C.B., Chief-Justice of New South Wales, to Earl Belmore, ... 199

APPENDIX B.

Argument of Counsel, and judgment on 'Daphne' in Vice-Admiralty Court, ... 203

APPENDIX C.

Earl Granville's Despatch to the Governor of Queensland, . 227

APPENDIX D.

Memorial of the citizens of Brisbane to the Honourable the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, . . . 231

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

H.M.S. 'ROSARIO' LYING IN FARM COVE, SYDNEY, ... *Frontispiece.*

NATIVES OF NEW CALEDONIA ENJOYING THE *DOLCE FAR NIENTE*, ... *facing page* 20

NATIVES OF NEW CALEDONIA COOKING YAMS, . 22

NATIVES OF TANNA, ... 36

SULPHUR BAY, WITH VOLCANO, TANNA, ... 43

CANNIBAL OF TANNA, ... 49

UP THE RIVER ERROMANGA, ... 59

INSIDE THE REEF AT LEVUKA, ... 115

THAKOMBAU, CHIEF OF BAU, FIJI, ... 123

BALL'S PYRAMID, ... 127

The lithographings from my own sketches have been executed by MESSRS. GEORGE WATERSTON & SON, *Edinburgh.*

DNAPPING IN THE SOUTH SEAS.

CHAPTER I.

HAVING received orders from Commodore Lambert sail for the South Sea Islands and make inquiry to the kidnapping of natives alleged to be carried by vessels flying the British flag, I left Sydney on he 4th March 1869, for the French island of New aledonia.

H.M.S. 'Rosario' had had a thorough refit, and all ands were looking forward to the island cruise after he horrible winter we had experienced in New Zealand, where no less than twenty-four gales had been logged from all parts of the compass in the space of six months, thus making exactly one per week.

The weather remaining calm, we continued steaming on the fifth grade of expansion until 8.30 A.M. on

the 6th instant, when sail was made and the s raised. But on the wind veering to the northw and falling light, steam was again used.

On the 9th we sighted Lord Howe's Island, E. which lies about 270 miles from the Australian c The most singular of all rocks is Ball's Pyra which stands like a needle about twelve miles f the main island, in a S.E. direction, quite perpe cular, and 1810 feet high.

We experienced during the night of the 9th, the whole of the next day, an extraordinary phe menon, in the shape of a violent storm of thunder a lightning. For thirty-six hours the heavens seem on fire; even during the day the flashes were qu discernible, and the thunder was incessant—at tim dying away in the distance, and then rolling up aga over the ship louder than before. The atmosphe was gloomy with haze, but no wind, and compar tively little rain.

On the 10th we were once more under sail. Th weather was uncertain,—wind shifting about fron N.E. to S., then from N.N.E. to E., accompanie with a peculiarly heavy swell from the eastward. A casualty occurred this morning which "cast a gloom," as the penny-a-liners would say, over the entir ship. The pets of the 'Rosario' were at one time

numerous, and consisted of a bear, four cats, a
aroo, a sea-gull, a bittern, four dogs, a canary,
ier with a black rabbit—a truly happy family.
had however thinned their numbers, accelerated
pentine. It will naturally be asked, Why tur-
e? but it appears blue-jackets regard a good
of turpentine, accompanied with a rubbing
before the galley-fire, as the grand cure for all
laints which animals are heir to. The kan-
o had a dose, not feeling well, and gave up the
st in front of the range. This was the first victim
the sick-bay-man's skill. The Australian bear,
nging to the first-lieutenant, was a tailless
imal, but made up for it by a pair of enormous
rs, like an elephant. This little beast was always
anting to go aloft, and had to be put under restraint
i his explorations after gum-leaves in the main-top.
; was his fate which was so tragical. This morning
e was discovered by the captain of the mizen-top
i the after-gratings, as flat as a pancake, under a
ossum rug which some person had been sleeping
i. We had a passenger, Mr. Hamilton, a lieutenant
the service, who was going up to Fiji to settle, and
believe he was considered the culprit.

Two of the cats, Jack and Ginger, were of opposite
spositions. The former would growl and swear at

Spring, my kangaroo hound, and Punch, the t
and allow no intimacy; while the latter wou
Spring take her head into his mouth, and wh
was lazily stretched out on the shady side of the
Ginger would come and lie down beside him;
one of the men would be sure to put his huge
paw over her neck, a proceeding that wa
resented.

Jack went aloft every morning with the ca
of the main-top, who was his particular chum
there was a general howl of lamentation throug
the ship when he disappeared mysteriously
morning, it is supposed in the coal-hulk which
been alongside the ship at Auckland, into the ho
of which he had been foraging for rats.

When in harbour, both these cats frequently fe
overboard, when they would immediately swim
the screw-well, get on the banjo, and mew loudl
until the quarter-master of the watch came to the
assistance.

Ginger ultimately vanished one night while cha
ing a rat overboard, but as we were at sea, her fa
was not known with certainty until the next day.

There was a certain wild cat who lived on ra
down below, and was never seen. In the dead
night scuffles and squeaks would be heard in tl

neighbourhood of the screw alley, and sundry unearthly noises would come from behind the boilers. These ceased, however, after leaving Tanranga, in New Zealand, and as the man-hole doors had been off the boilers during our stay there, it is supposed the unfortunate animal had been drowned inside one of them when they were run up.

So much for some of our pets. After experiencing very peculiar weather, on the evening of the 14th we drew near the south-eastern reefs of New Caledonia. All that night we could smell the coral reefs distinctly to windward on our starboard beam, and the navigating lieutenant was on the fore-yard until we sighted the Amedée lighthouse, at the entrance of the Bulari passage, which we did at 2.45 P.M., on the 16th.

The reefs that surround this large island are very numerous and extensive, and the greatest care is necessary in making the land, for they extend to the S.E. to the distance of forty-three miles from the mainland, and the lighthouse, just inside the passage on the reef, is twelve miles from the island itself.

Just as we were about to enter the passage through the reef, the after air-pump broke down, and we had to trust to the foremost one to bring the ship in.

No sooner are you inside, than the water changes

from the deep ocean blue to a pale green, and the constant motion caused by the ocean swell is exchanged for smooth water, allowing the lower deck scuttles to be opened, and causing an increased quantity of fresh air to circulate below.

These coral reefs are wonderful structures,—on the sea-side rising sheer up from the ocean depths like a wall, beating back the fury of the sea, and compelling the waves to acknowledge their supremacy; while on the land side all is calm, and the sea having expended its impotent fury has bowed itself in submission, and gently ripples against the sand and parti-coloured coral islands.

The dull roar of the sea breaking on these reefs will generally warn a ship of their existence at night, but in the day-time the surf thus created always leaves a haze, which, with the sun right ahead, is very dangerous. The reefs to the N.W. of New Caledonia extend to upwards of 140 miles from the land.

The chart we had was a French copy of Captain Denham's survey, as far as the outline went, but was very dissimilar to the English way of delineating the different characteristics of the land; and those islands represented as coral we found to be sandbanks, on coral foundation. The weather also was still marked

by an extraordinary haziness and mirage; objects appeared twice their size, and having to thread our way between numerous islands and sandbanks, with none of the main leading marks visible, we mistook Mando Island for Maitre Island, and passed inside of it instead of outside, and thereby slightly grazed the edge of a sandbank; however, the ship did not hang, and answered her helm quite readily, so I am certain no damage could have been done. The fact however was reported to the Commodore, in accordance with the Admiralty instructions.

Mr. Jackson and myself were not sorry when the ship was snugly moored in the little harbour of Noumea at 3 P.M.

New Caledonia extends for about 250 miles in a N.W. and S.E. direction, between the parallels of 20° and 22° 30′ of south latitude,—the lighthouse being in lat. 22° 28′ 35″ S., and long. 166° 29′ 35″ E., and about 1000 miles distant from Sydney. The island averages a uniform breadth of about thirty-five miles, and is surrounded by coral reefs extending principally in the direction of N.W. and S.E., thus covering a space of upwards of 400 miles from the Isle of Pines in a north-westerly direction. It was discovered by Captain Cook in 1774 as he was coming from Mallicolo, one of the New Hebrides,

and is now, with the neighbouring Loyalty Islands, in possession of the French.

I waited on his Excellency Admiral Guillain, the Governor, who received me with great courtesy, but as the council was then sitting, and the mail closing for Sydney, the next day was fixed for the despatch of business. I was not sorry to escape and get on board, as a cocked hat and epaulettes with the thermometer at 83° in the shade was anything but pleasant.

The weather was extremely hot and unpleasant, and to add to the general discomfort, no fresh water was to be had except in breakers, and as we could not get enough for the day's consumption without exposing a boat's crew all day in the sun, I was obliged to condense with one boiler. There was plenty of coal to be had, and knowing we should see no more until we got back to Sydney, I was resolved not only to fill up, but to take 100 bags on deck, much to the disgust of the first-lieutenant, who eyed his paint and gilt wistfully, but nevertheless managed to stow them so well that nothing suffered materially.

The next day I went to Government House with my instructions, but neither his Excellency nor myself was at home in the other's language.

It would have been a rich treat for a looker-on to have heard us, he in broken English, and myself in very broken French, mixed with Spanish, doing the polite. Lord Stanley's and the Admiralty despatches were heart-breaking for both of us, and I think the old gentleman shed tears over the latter; but when he caught sight of a certain *printed* document, his face grew radiant, and he seized upon it as a drowning man would upon a life-buoy, and was soon revelling in its contents.

He shortly after suggested that an interpreter might render us mutual assistance, at which it was my turn to rejoice, but as there seemed some difficulty in getting one, I said one of the officers should accompany me the next day; however, before that, a young man in the town was found, who being cautioned to preserve the strictest secrecy, was duly employed, and we soon warmed to our work.

The French Government have every reason to complain about the abominable system that is now being carried on by British vessels among the islands. As long as they confined their kidnapping practices to the New Hebrides or Kingsmill groups, the French could not complain, as they get labour from those islands themselves; but when natives were decoyed from the Loyalty Islands, which are depen-

of New Caledonia, the case was quite different. The traders take the natives to Queensland and Fiji, and get so much a head for what is called "passage-money," which varies from £4, 10s. to £6, 10s. a head.

No less than thirteen English vessels have been engaged in taking away natives from Lifou and Maré since May 1865—nearly all from Sydney. These vessels clear out ostensibly for the bêche-de-mer and cocoa-nut-oil trade, but in many cases their real cruise is after natives, whom they seduce by false promises, and often capture by violence, and then run them across to Brisbane in Queensland, or to the Fiji Islands.

The French Government of New Caledonia also obtains labourers from the New Hebrides, but the most stringent regulations exist with regard to the traffic. None can be received into the island except directly under the Government supervision; as the vessels chartered by the Government, from time to time, have proper agents on board, and no natives are on any pretence allowed to be taken away from their homes except of their own free will. On their arrival at Noumea they are visited by three Government officials, namely, the captain of the port, the health officer, and the immigration agent.

These officers ascertain if the natives are on board of their own free will, whether they are in good health, also if they fully understand their engagement, which is read out to them. This agreement is at first thoroughly explained to them by the Government agent before they leave their island, and it is read out to them a second time when they come to Noumea.

Their wages range from 10 to 20 francs a month, with rations of 900 grammes (2 lbs.) of rice a day, and 450 grammes (1 lb.) of salt pork a week, doctor's care gratis, and a free passage back to their homes after two years. So strict are these regulations, that on several occasions the Government transport 'Bonite' has taken the natives back to their homes, in the absence of any vessel to charter.

The Governor was of opinion that the Protestant missionaries connived at this traffic, until I showed him a memorial from the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, in which they complain of what has been going on, and ask for an investigation. This idea of his had evidently been fostered by the cantankerous commandant at Lifou, who was always making complaints against the missionaries of the London Missionary Society who are stationed amongst the Loyalty group. He complained that the mission

schooner 'Dayspring' was engaged in trading, but I could find no other foundation for the complaint than the fact that on one occasion half a gross of empty jars, for pickling pork, had been sent from Melbourne, instead of half a dozen, and that two planks of wood had been sent on board to Captain Frazer, her commander, as a present from the Rev. Mr. Macfarlane, to make a cot for Mrs. Frazer's baby.

This circumstance had been personally explained to the Governor by the missionaries, and he had been assured that no trading of any description went on, and that the schooner merely brought them up their yearly supplies; but His Excellency simply referred them to the commandant's letter.

The truth is that the French Government have got the opportunity of returning us tit for tat. We expostulated with them about the coolies a few years ago, and now they return the compliment, and accuse us of kidnapping, and we can do nothing but point to the Queensland Labour Act, of which very interesting document we shall have occasion presently to see the fruits.

CHAPTER II.

THE next morning the surgeon reported a large number of the men on the sick-list with dysentery, and I ascertained that the convicts on shore were in no better health. The month of March is generally an unhealthy one amongst these islands, the hurricane season not being over, although the hurricanes themselves seldom, if ever, devastate the southern portion of this island. The peculiar weather we had been experiencing was fully accounted for by the fact that a furious hurricane was sweeping over the Fijis at the same time.

Hearing that some of the New Hebrides natives were working on Mr. Joubert's sugar estate, I rode out there, breakfasting at the Government model farm, which is worked by convicts on the good-behaviour system, something like the Irish. Our road lay for about two miles alongside the harbour, when we turned off inland towards the mountains, passing over a low range of wooded hills, but only here and there in the valleys was there any sign

of cultivation. The farm is about eight miles from Noumea, up a beautiful valley, backed by a fine mass of mountain; here we breakfasted, and then went over the different workshops. All men sentenced to ten years, I was informed, never see France again, but become colonists; they have a plot of ground given them gratis, and can, if they choose, become respectable members of colonial society.

The men here looked perfectly contented, and evidently took a great pride in their different work; and our astonishment was great at finding an English groom presiding over the stable department; I need hardly say the horses were in excellent condition, and everything in splendid order.

At noon, after sketching the farm, we remounted our horses for the sugar plantations. Our road wound through fertile valleys with a deep rich loam, and low wooded hills gradually rising higher and higher towards the interior. The whole aspect of the country was one of luxurious vegetation, only wanting enterprising colonists to bring forth cotton, sugar, and coffee in abundance.

The rain came down rather heavily now and then, and wet us through, but we contrived to get shelter under some of the largest trees, and at 2 P.M. reached Mr. Joubert's sugar-mill.

The establishment consisted of 49 Tanna and Vaté men, 8 convicts, and 6 other white men, the brothers Joubert superintending. Several thousand pounds have been expended in the erection of the machinery, which is propelled by water-power from the river close by, but they hope to make it pay. The boiling-house is a fine large, airy building, and the specimens of sugar looked excellent. The natives, as far as I could judge, seemed intelligent and happy.

They have no clothing but a cord round the waist, which answers several purposes.

Mr. Joubert varies their weekly pound of pork by 1½ lbs. of fish, when procurable; he gives them a little tobacco now and then as a present, and altogether treats them very well. He has not yet been able to build a proper dwelling-house, and has only a small cottage, which is infested with rats; he however gave us a hearty welcome, and we left about four o'clock, enjoying a pleasant ride of fifteen miles back to Noumea.

The wretched animals that some of the officers rode on were a sight to behold; several dropped astern, dismounted, and led their beasts, and there was a rumour the next morning that one gallant sub-lieutenant carried his horse in on his back to

save time, but I did not see him, and therefore cannot vouch for the truth of it.

The following morning I woke with a splitting headache, caused by the previous day's ducking and ride in the sun, and felt feverish and ill, but as the Governor had issued cards for a grand dinner to myself and officers for the evening, I wrapt my head in a wet towel and kept quiet all day.

At sunset we pulled ashore and strolled up to Government House, a handsome building, surrounded by a beautiful garden, where the Aide-de-Camp and Secretary received us. His Excellency joined us shortly after our arrival, and we adjourned to a large verandah, overlooking the garden. The sun had now set, and the delicious plants were loading the air with those perfumes so essentially tropical, and which, whether in the Brazils, the West Indies, or the South Sea Islands, have the same peculiar languid effect on the senses at that hour. I however could not enjoy them as usual, having a low fever, and dreaded the very thought of a two hours' feed.

We sat down eighteen to dinner, which was served as only the French can, and this is all I need say on the matter, as I consider it cruel to any of my readers who may have had only cold mutton for dinner (perhaps an unfortunate post-captain on the half-pay

of 10s. 6d. a day) to tell of all the roast turkeys stuffed with chestnuts, the trout, served with hot chilis and garnished with olives, chocolate in elegant china cups to play with between the courses, the cool light wines, and above all, the ice, machine-made, of which his Excellency was justly proud, the whole requiring a better pen than mine to describe. But alas! I could eat literally nothing, and contented myself with sipping iced claret and water. The Governor's Secretary, who was sitting next to me, when he felt my hot hand, called out that the Commandant had the fever, upon which his Excellency gravely felt my pulse, although engaged in carving one of the aforesaid turkeys. He wore the cross of the Legion of Honour, and cut up every dish with his own hands; a servant, after the fish had been served, presenting him with a white cap, which he immediately put on, and a large curved knife like a scimitar.

My friend the little Secretary was most unremitting in his attentions and inquiries after my health, during the three weary hours we were at table, somewhat after the fashion of the kind-hearted Mrs. Plornish in *Little Dorrit:* "Me hope you well soon—how you do?" and chinked his glass against mine in a sympathetic way. At last it was all over, and cigars being handed round we adjourned to the garden.

His Excellency, who saw I was really ill, insisted on my swallowing a cup of tea, which being strongly flavoured with six lumps of cockroachy sugar, finished me, and compelled my retirement into the privacy of an orange grove.

The next morning some of the officers went to visit the convict establishment, and saw a good many curious things that astonished them—amongst others, several men who had been put to the "question" by thumbscrews and other ingenious devices which carried them back to the days of the Inquisition. Mortification had taken place in one instance, and a finger had to be cut off, the doctor said, quite as coolly as if he were only going to draw a tooth. But the principal object of interest was the guillotine, together with a wretch, brazen-faced and hardened in crime, who was to be operated upon in another week. The doctor patted him on the back, and told him it would be soon over, in quite a fatherly way. The prisoners have comfortable quarters enough, and if they behave properly are at liberty to hire themselves out as servants and labourers; in fact, it is their own fault if they prefer being tortured and guillotined.

Some of the worst characters in France are here, as well as many Arabs from Algeria, and one really

pitied the latter working in the road-gangs, because they are a conquered race, and their knowledge of right and wrong must be exceedingly limited in comparison with that of their French comrades, and the change from a nomadic life to the martial discipline of a French camp must have been severe indeed.

It is this military system that pervades everything they do that makes the French such bad colonists, and so hated by the natives.

When at Tahiti in 1855 I was surprised at the unnecessary restraints put upon a harmless and gentle people. They appeared to imagine that by keeping a taut hand over the islanders, and erecting numerous guard-houses and a large calaboose, they would by degrees win their confidence. After 8 P.M. nobody was allowed to go out of his house, and patrols went round picking up everybody they met, locking them safely up in the said calaboose until the morning, whether drunk or sober, from which they were liberated only on the payment of $1, or twenty-four hours in the road-gang in default. Our captain's steward, a most steady respectable man, was caught in this manner, much to his indignation. The people cannot be expected to understand this treatment in their own town of Papeete; and who can blame them? It is to be hoped these stringent regulations have

been somewhat modified since then, as they do not exist at Noumea.

Large stone barracks are in the course of erection, and good roads being made; the convict establishment is situated on the other side on an island that forms the harbour. The principal disadvantage of Noumea is its being so far to leeward, as owing to this the trade-wind does not reach the harbour sufficiently to insure a healthy circulation,—the high mountains to the southward and eastward effectually screening the place from the cooling sea breeze.

The inhabitants are a strong, well-made race, of a dark brown colour, almost approaching to black, and nearer resembling the Erromangans than the Tannese. I did not see many about the town, but obtained some fair photographs of the natives in different parts of the island.

Some of them have agreeable countenances, but not many; they go quite naked, with the usual exception of thick but narrow grass mats, and frizzle out their coarse woolly hair something like the Fijians, but with less pains.

The opposite group of natives was taken by M. Robin, a French artist; and represents a scene outside a native village, with the men smoking their pipes.

Their huts are round, rising to a peak in the centre, and well thatched with broad leaves of plantain mixed with long grass.

I noticed while riding inland that on the sides of the low hills skirting the valleys, numerous artificial ridges were discernible, somewhat resembling those seen surrounding the old hill Pas of New Zealand, but narrower and more in number, (evidently the remains of former years' plantations, when the native population was more numerous,) being traces of ancient irrigation for the cultivation of the taro plant, which requires plenty of water.

As some doubt appeared to exist in the minds of the French authorities regarding the proceedings of the English brig '——,' then in the harbour, the Governor detained her, and informed me that he had every reason to believe the master of her was the same man who, when in command of the English schooner '——,' had, two years previously, carried off some natives from the Loyalty Islands. He now refused to show his papers to the port officers. I found out that he had some natives on board, which he said were to be landed at Maré and Tanna. He expressed deep horror at kidnapping, and was so affected at being suspected, that the officer I sent on

board at once formed the opinion that he was a deep one;" so I went on board myself, but could find nothing wrong in his papers. I gave him a good rubbing down for not showing his papers when requested, and cautioned him about his cruise, which he solemnly assured me was only for cocoa-nut-oil, sandal-wood, and bêche-de-mer. He was consequently allowed to proceed. But afterwards, when examining some papers, I found his name, as part owner of the schooners '——' and '——,' in March 1868, and I had then little doubt that this highly sensitive gentleman was the same that Admiral Guillain suspected.

The following evening, the last of our stay, several French officers dined on board, and were much interested in our beautiful 6½-ton gun, and the Snider rifles. We found them well-informed, gentlemanly men, which has always been my experience of French naval officers.

CHAPTER III.

On the 23d March we unmoored at 6 A.M., and just as the steam was up and the anchor at the bows, a boat came alongside laden with bananas and guavas, a present from our guests of the previous evening.

We steamed through the Havannah passage, forty-five miles from Noumea, before we passed through the outer reef, to the north of the Isle of Pines; threading our way among sandbanks and coral reefs, until we once more, on passing Uen Island, caught sight of the blue ocean water, and at 4 P.M. cleared the last reef, and were once more at sea; at sunset we made sail, and stood towards the island of Maré.

Owing to baffling easterly winds we could not weather the island, and were obliged to tack. The weather was very fine, and the ship's company rapidly recovered their health.

At daylight on the 26th observed the island of Aneiteum; got up steam, and by 10 A.M. were snugly anchored inside the reef in $8\frac{3}{4}$ fathoms.

Like the majority of the South Sea islands, the anchorage is formed by the reefs, which are so plainly discernible that an officer on the fore-yard is all that is necessary to pilot the ship in, always providing the sun is not right ahead. The boats were immediately sent away to water at a beautiful stream just abreast the ship.

I was soon pulling ashore towards the missionary's house, the Rev. Dr. Geddie, who has been here for twenty-one years, and has had the happiness of seeing the islanders, from being savages and cannibals, become civilized, while he could number a great many real converts to Christianity.

Aneiteum is the southernmost of the New Hebrides, and is situated in lat. 20° 15′ s., and long. 169° 45′ E. It is the head-quarters of the Scottish Presbyterian mission, whose printing press for the translated portion of the Bible is here.

Dr. Geddie informed me that no kidnapping had taken place at this island for a considerable time, as the natives are too well aware of what is in store for them to be seduced away, and the traders have given it up as a bad job. A fine young fellow, however, the chief of the harbour, made a complaint to me that three years ago, a vessel called the '——,' commanded by a man named ——, and

owned by a Mr. ——, had taken on board several natives, who had voluntarily shipped, and that two of them had been struck with a billet of wood by one of the crew, which resulted in their death on the following day. One of them belonged to Tanna.

Dr. Geddie said that during his recent visit to the other islands in the group, in the missionary schooner, general complaints were made by the chiefs about the way white men had come in vessels and stolen away their countrymen. At the island of Espiritu Santo, the largest of the group, a chief and six men had been forcibly taken away from a place called Pilia. Again, at Pussé, in the same island, the natives refused all intercourse with the missionaries, the chief even refusing a present, a most unusual thing for them to do. At Cape Lisburne (Espiritu Santo) only one man remained on the beach to receive them, the others flying to the forest directly the boat from the 'Dayspring' was seen approaching the shore. Directly, however, they discovered who their visitors were, they all came back, and received them very well. They informed Dr. Geddie that so many of their people had been stolen that they were afraid to come to the boat at first.

At Tongoa Island a long time elapsed before they

could get any intercourse with the natives, as shortly before two English vessels had carried away a great number.

At Three Hills Island their attitude was threatening, although years before this traffic had sprung up, both Bishops Selwyn and Patteson were treated very kindly by them. The latter, who is Bishop of Melanesia, has devoted himself to the instruction of the islanders, having his head-quarters at Norfolk Island, and takes periodical trips round the islands in his mission schooner, the 'Southern Cross.'

A very intelligent young chief took me over the hills to a spot where I made some sketches. Several of the officers came for a bathe in the river, which runs down from the interior of the island. The path led through groves of cocoa-nuts, with numerous bread-fruit trees and bananas, with patches of taro and yams, all green and luxuriant. After a quarter of an hour's walk we came to a waterfall, not of any height, but rushing over some boulders, with every sort of tropical vegetation lining the banks; it then, rounding a steep cliff, formed a still, deep pool, into which nearly all of us plunged. The natives came to look on, and appeared to enjoy the fun extremely. The water was deliciously cool, as the forest trees completely shut out the sun's rays. On returning, I

was introduced to Mrs. and Miss Geddie, and took tea with them, relating all the news I could think of, and found that of several months back was quite new to them. At parting, the Doctor very kindly gave me some spears and arrows (some of them tipped with human bone), which are now getting very scarce, especially at Aneiteum, also specimens of the Bible in Aneitcumese, printed on the island.

It is a curious fact that the languages spoken at Aneiteum, Tanna, Erromanga, and Vaté are all different. Mr. Neilson, at Tanna, has no assistance from Aneiteum in translating the Word of God; Mr. M'Nair, at Erromanga, derives no help from the labours of either Dr. Geddie or Mr. Neilson; and likewise Mr. Cosh, at Vaté, is equally alone in his work. What renders this the more extraordinary is that nearly all the islands are within sight of each other from some of the hills. I asked Bishop Patteson about this singular circumstance, and he said they were to all intents and purposes radically different. There is certainly a marked physical difference in the appearance of the inhabitants, and owing to these islands running almost due north and south, they must at some time or other have formed the meeting-place of people of different types, namely, the Papuan, New-Hollander, and Malay. Perhaps next to the stone

images on Easter Island there is no subject more interesting to the philologist.

We have remarkable instances of the maritime migrations of the Malay race, and of involuntary voyages of others; but the inhabitants of Easter Island present the most extraordinary instances of voluntary or involuntary migration on record. It lies 1200 miles from the nearest group of islands, and 2460 miles from the mainland of America. These islanders, when discovered, possessed neither the means nor the knowledge to construct anything similar to those monuments, the workmanship of which, according to Captain Cook, was not inferior to the best piece of masonry in England. Some of the statues were even then lying overthrown, and measured 27 feet in length, and 8 feet across the shoulders, while others still standing appeared much larger. The platforms on which they stood averaged from 30 feet to 40 feet long, and 12 feet to 16 feet broad, being from 3 feet to 12 feet high, all built of hewn stones, in the Cyclopean style, having no cement. Although the inhabitants belong to the same race as the Sandwich-Islanders, Tahitians, and New-Zealanders—for Cook found them speaking the same language,—and having similar colour and features, they possessed only four canoes, and these

so small as not to be capable of containing more than four persons.

Mr. Clement Markham, in his work on Cuzco and Lima, says, "Captain Cook, in writing of these remains, might be describing the temple of Pachacamac, or the ruins of Tiahuanaco (Peru), so great is the resemblance."

Dr. J. L. Palmer, R.N., in his recent interesting paper read before the Royal Geographical Society (Jan. 24th, 1870), mentions a tradition that exists among them of a migration from Oparo, which island is 1900 miles due west. Images and platforms have also been discovered there. On Swallow Island, in lat. 2° 41′ S., and long. 171° 40′ W., and about thirty-five miles N.W. from Enderby's Island, a large stone pyramid, apparently of long standing, was seen by Captain Green of the 'Agate.'

Mr. Thurston, acting English consul of Fiji and Tonga, told me that the remains of solid masonry were to be seen among some of the islands near the line, and not far from the Solomon group; and that the natives had traditions of white men having been there a long time before, adding, "But they were turtles, and arrows and spears would not hurt them,"—no doubt some of the early Spanish adventurers cast away on these islands, wearing portions of their armour.

Some members of the Polynesian family have performed forced voyages of considerable distance in canoes, having been blown off their own coasts, and having landed hundreds of miles distant from the place whence they started.

Malte Brun says that in 1696 two canoes, containing thirty people, were thrown by storms and contrary winds on the Philippine Islands, 800 miles from their homes.

Captain Beechey, R.N., gives an interesting account of three canoes from Anao, or Chain Island, in the South Pacific, being dispersed by the monsoon to several uninhabited islands. He found them 600 miles from their own island, and took them back, but many had perished from hunger during their involuntary voyage.

Kotzebue tells us how Kadu and three of his countrymen were driven from Ulea; they drifted about for eight months, sustaining themselves with rain-water and fish they caught, and were eventually cast upon the islands of Aur; their distance from home in a direct line being 1500 miles.

The New-Zealanders all state that their ancestors came from a place called "Hawaiki," but where this is, remains a point of dispute. Some writers think Hawaii, in the Sandwich Islands; others Savii, in the

Samoan group; but from the fact that they are members of the great Polynesian family, and of Malay origin, I am inclined to think that the Navigators were the great centre from which they radiated after leaving the Malay peninsula, and thus spread by degrees to the Sandwich and Society groups, and New Zealand. The first war-dance I ever saw in New Zealand was at the spot where the great Arawa canoe, one of the original eight, landed—namely, at Maketu, in the Bay of Plenty. The loyal tribe of the Arawas have their principal Pa at this place, and it is from there you traverse their country on the way to the famous hot lakes.

But I must stop this digression, and return to the New Hebrides. Having completed water, and laid in a good stock of cocoa-nuts and limes, we weighed anchor early next morning, the 27th of March, and arrived at Port Resolution, Tanna, the same afternoon.

CHAPTER IV.

TANNA is the most lovely and fertile of all the New Hebrides. Rising abruptly from the ocean with its green table-topped mountains piled gracefully together, it presents a mass of evergreen vegetation most inviting to the eye.

On opening the harbour, the 'Rosario' folded her white wings like a sea-bird preparing to settle itself, and slowly steamed into the little cove, causing, as we afterwards learnt, the greatest consternation amongst the natives.

Numerous dusky forms were seen crowding under the forest trees that descend to the water's edge, but we had no idea that they were expecting the ship to open fire upon them. The Port Resolution natives had once before felt the effects of a man-of-war's great guns, and they are proud to show you the hole a 32-pounder made in one of their huts from the guns of H.M.S. '——.' The reason for this display of force has never been rightly understood by ourselves, therefore I am quite sure

the natives regard it as a profound mystery, in which chiefs, naval officers, missionaries, shot and shell are mixed up in a sort of nautico-diplomatic confusion.

Unfortunately our men-of war are too often sent up amongst the islands to shell some native settlement in return for the massacre of a boat's crew, brought about by the villany and rapacious cruelty of white traders. Only one side of the question is ever heard, and the consequence is that many innocent people suffer.

The Rev. Mr. Neilson told me that on our approach the chiefs sent messengers to him asking what we were coming for. Had they or their people been doing anything wrong? Did the big ship mean mischief? Was she going to fight them? In spite of his reply that he knew we were friends, the chiefs deemed it prudent to collect their men in one spot, and the women and children moved further from the harbour into the forest. Just after we anchored, two natives, bolder than the rest, ventured to take a look at the 'Rosario,' and stepped out on a flat piece of rock just astern of her. The moment was inopportune, for it being just sunset, the gangway muskets were fired, upon which they both fell flat down as if they had been shot, causing several of the blue-jackets on the top-gallant forecastle to

laugh very heartily. The natives hearing this, as the ship was close to the shore, and seeing at the same time the ensign being hauled down, and the bugle sounding off, got up, looking very foolish, and slunk away into the mangrove bushes. Confidence, however, was fully restored when Mr. Neilson, who had come off to the ship, was seen pulling ashore with me, and the chiefs were soon crowding round shaking hands.

Preparations on a large scale had been in progress for the last two days for the full-moon yam feast which takes place during this month, the new yams just coming into season. I took a walk with Mr. Neilson along the promontory that forms the harbour, and met large numbers of natives bearing in yams and huge bunches of bananas, with an occasional grunter, to the coming feast. I returned to take a cup of tea with the missionary and his wife, who is a daughter of Dr. Geddie of Aneiteum. They had no milk, and only brackish water, but made me heartily welcome to what they had. They have two children, one an infant, the eldest about sixteen months old, in charge of a Tanna girl, who seemed devoted to it. This youngster was playing with the club of a chief who had come in to speak to Mr. Neilson, which he had deposited in a corner; upon his departure he took it from the child, who

very quietly allowed him to do so, but upon his leaving the cottage the little thing flung itself down on the floor in a paroxysm of rage, howling and kicking in grand style, and it was some time before its feelings were soothed.

Most of the officers having joined us, and the moon being now well up, we went out, under Mr. Neilson's guidance, to witness the dances.

Under an enormous banyan tree, which would have sheltered all the crews of the Australian squadron, and room to spare, the feast was prepared. Huge bunches, or rather branches, of bananas, six and seven feet high, piles of young yams, some cooking, others raw, and large masses of cake or pudding made of mashed taro and banana, were to be seen on all sides.

Groups of natives wandered about with that indescribable air of easy do-nothing sort of carelessness which we cannot help envying in these tropical countries, unencumbered with drapery of any sort, and showing off their supple figures to the best advantage.

The men wore an extraordinary article called a crupper, which is not easy or advisable to describe, and which marks a Tannese immediately you see him out of his own island. Their hair was dressed in a sort of thatch, several hairs being bound to-

gether with fibre, and the whole when finished being laid flat back on the head and tied behind, very similar to the manner of the ancient Egyptians. It takes four years to complete a chief's head in this fashion, but when finished it has a very graceful appearance, and serves to keep off the sun's rays. Patches of red ochre and other colours were plentifully daubed over their faces and bodies, with feathers in their hair and ears.

The women wore a little grass mat, just sufficiently long for decency, and had plenty of shell necklaces and bracelets. I noticed some pretty faces among them. All were busy either cooking or dispensing food, which they offered to us as we went among them. Many had children at their backs clinging round their mothers' necks, and apparently very shy, notwithstanding our advances.

The two natives represented in the opposite photograph is another by M. Robin.

The yam, which is the principal article of food, grows to a large size, and I have seen them 3 feet long and looking like a knotted club.

The Tannese are under the middle height, and of a light-brown colour, with very open and pleasant features, far surpassing the rest of the New Hebrideans in intelligence, excepting perhaps the Aneiteumese.

The full moon threw a flood of light on this peaceful forest scene, and we sauntered about among the different groups shaking hands with them and distributing small modicums of tobacco, and patting the babies on the head. A large space was left under the banyan tree for the dances, which were now about to commence.

The men throwing away their spears, bows, and cawasses,[1] formed themselves into a circle, and the tune, or rather dirge, being led by one, the chorus was taken up by all the rest, with clapping of hands and stamping of feet, all in the most correct time; whether they faced inwards or outwards, changing, as they did incessantly, every foot came down at the same moment, and every hand met the other with a precision that was wonderful, and could only be the result of continuous practice.

Their dusky forms, ornamented with white feathers, now forming a circle, then separating into two regular lines, alternately in the bright light of the moon, and in the deep shade of the forest trees, combined with the monotonous chant, rendered it a scene of savage though peaceful revelry, not easy to forget.

We vigorously applauded the succession of dances, and at their conclusion several of the natives came

[1] Projectiles made of lava.

up and displayed with great pride the bullet-wounds they had received in their recent fight with Yanka-rubbie, whom they had driven back west of the volcano, after some days of hard fighting. The traders having supplied them with muskets for barter, the wars are far more serious than they used to be.

Mr. Neilson complained to me of the way muskets and ammunition had been introduced into the island as a means of seducing the natives away for Queensland and Fiji plantations. Muskets and tobacco are irresistible baits, but if fraud is not successful, force is used. The following is an instance which was taken down by myself from the mouth of the principal witness at Mr. Neilson's house. A. B., an Englishman, made the following statement, which has also been reported by the secretary of the Scotch Presbyterian Mission :—

"In March 1868 the schooner '——,' (—— master,) came to the north end of Tanna, where ——, a late Southern American, and myself resided, making cocoa-nut oil, and wished me to try and get natives to go to Brisbane (Queensland) for three years. I declined to do so. He then left in the schooner, but hove-to off the point where two sons of a chief had brought down some cocoa-nuts to barter. —— sent a boat half way on shore, and

hailed the lads to swim off to her with the nuts; they did so, and when alongside the boat they were dragged on board by the hair of their heads, and taken to the '——,' which sailed away with them. The chief, their father, saw the whole transaction, but was too far up the hill to give them any assistance; but he came running up to me and my mate in a state of great excitement, and warned us to clear out, which we did, coming down to Port Resolution."

A. B. moreover stated that he has all along refused to have anything to do with getting natives, but that ——, known by the natives as "Charlie," is a notorious man-stealer. It is probable the chief knew this, for he allowed A. B. to go back and fetch their gear, but Charlie was told to keep away.

The '——' was at Port Resolution before them, and on A. B. telling —— that his establishment was broken up in consequence of his conduct he only laughed at him.

I was determined to examine some of the principal chiefs myself, with Mr. Neilson's assistance as interpreter, and for this reason made arrangements with him for Monday the 29th March, as it would be necessary to walk to the valley of Kasarumene, which lies west of the volcano, and about eight miles from Port Resolution.

Sunday intervening, I was curious to see if the natives had as yet any respect for the Lord's day. I had given strict orders at every island we had visited that no canoes should be allowed alongside, supposing they came to barter, but to my surprise and satisfaction not one made its appearance, although on other days numbers came; and although Mr. Neilson told me he could only reckon three real converts at present, still I could see his influence was already considerable in the neighbourhood of Port Resolution. Another circumstance showed this: two of the dingy-boys had landed some of the officers for a walk on Sunday afternoon, and before they shoved off from the shore wanted the natives to get them some cocoa-nuts, to which they pointed; the people however shook their heads, and one called out "To-morrow."

All this is the more satisfactory when it is remembered that a missionary dared not reside in Tanna until a year ago, and previous to this, seven years had elapsed since one had been there.

Mr. Neilson being skilful in gunshot wounds has attended the wounded in the late fights, and saved several lives, but a district that contained from 800 to 1000 people has been completely devastated.

CHAPTER V.

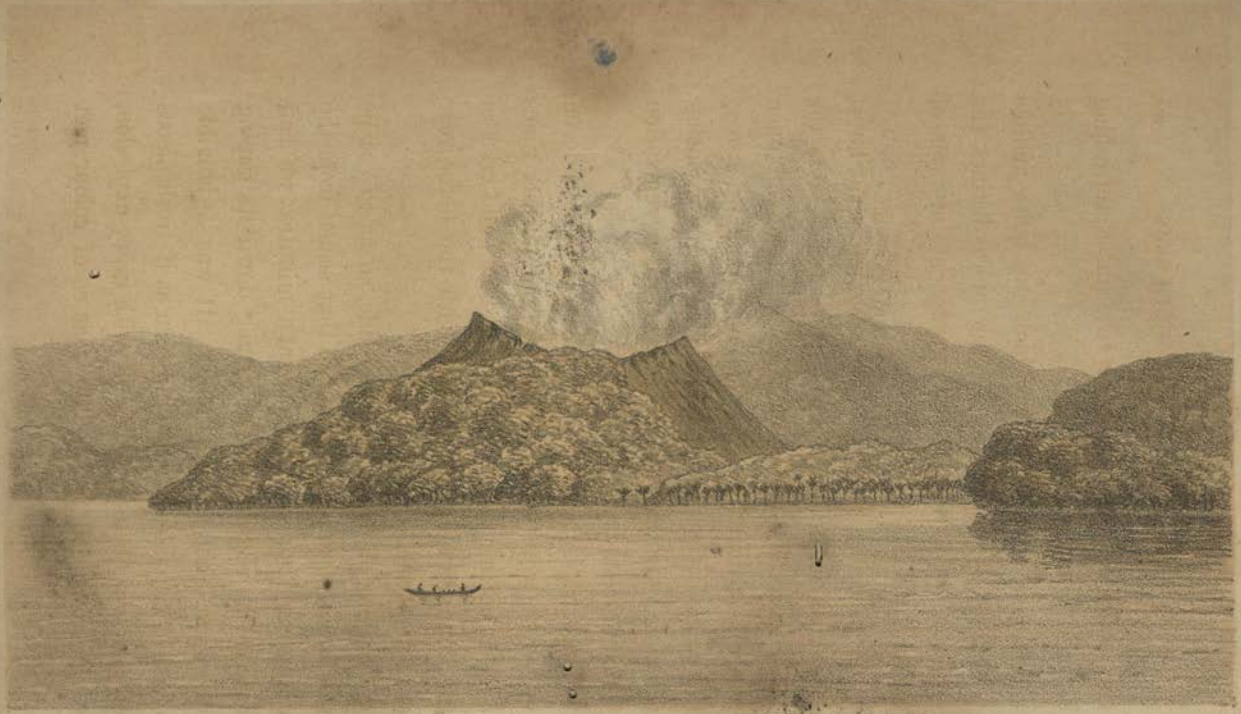
EARLY on Monday morning, Mr. Neilson and myself, accompanied by Mr. Moore, sub-lieutenant, and Mr. Hamilton, started off for the volcano which overlooks the valley of Kasarumene. Notwithstanding his influence over the natives, Mr. Neilson thought it prudent to take two Aneiteumese with us to feel the way, and ascertain whether the chief Yankarubbie would receive us, as fighting had been going on so recently. Our road was quite safe as far as the volcano, but further than that it was not thought advisable to venture without first sending messengers, as owing to the recent outrages perpetrated by white skippers, it would not have been surprising if the natives should attempt some act of treachery; and, moreover, as they are all cannibals in the valley, a little prudence was deemed necessary, more particularly as I could see Mrs. Neilson was rather doubtful of the reception we should get, and it was far too hot for us to wear uniform.

We dressed ourselves in flannel and took no

arms of any description, on purpose not to excite suspicion.

The path from the head of the harbour lay over densely wooded hills, among which the cocoa-nut, bread-fruit, and banyan trees were most conspicuous. One of those latter, in particular, threw out its lower branches at least sixty feet above the ground, spreading to an enormous distance all around, supported at intervals by great trunks that had taken root from time to time, as the tree extended itself, forming trees themselves of no mean size. These trunks and lower branches were covered with innumerable parasites, some clinging closely, others hanging like long bell-ropes from a great height ready to take root as soon as they reached the earth.

We frequently stopped to enable our Aneiteumese friends to gather cocoa-nuts, which they did with the greatest ease. Selecting a slanting tree, they *walked* up by means of their hands and feet, their bodies never touching the trunk. It requires a good length of arm to perform this operation, and, of course, naked feet. Cutting a stake, and sharpening one end, the butt-end being placed on the ground, they soon detached the thick fibre from the nut by hacking it off with the pointed end, and a single blow in the right place breaks open the top of the nut, enabling you to drink



SULPHUR BAY WITH VOLCANO TANNA

the delicious milk, which is the most refreshing draught you can take.

The roar of the volcano, which was quite audible from Port Resolution, now grew more distinct, the eruptions occurring on an average at intervals of five and a half minutes.

After a pleasant walk of six miles under the forest trees that formed an impenetrable screen from the fierce rays of the sun, we emerged upon an open part directly at the base of the mountain, which rose before us like a great brown cinder-heap, presenting a striking contrast to the dense green vegetation which surrounded it on all sides.

The dark brown platform on its weather side, on which we were standing, had been in former times a great battle-ground, where the shouts and cries of the combatants were mingled with the fierce roar of the volcano.

Climbing slowly its weather side, so as to escape the fumes of sulphurous smoke that issued from the crater, in the course of twenty minutes we had reached its edge, and were gazing down its gaping throat, at least 600 feet deep. It was a horrible chasm : the sides rugged and torn as if fresh pieces of rock were being blasted off with every explosion, while brown, red, and yellow masses of colour met

the eye through the smoke that continually ascended as from the bottomless pit, and was carried away to leeward by the friendly trade-wind.

As I have said, every five or six minutes an explosion took place which shook the mountain, and large pieces of vitrified rock and cinder were hurled far above our heads, accompanied by a shower of small volcanic dust and ashes, which fell to leeward, covering the western side of the mountain.

There was a horrible fascination in looking down this chimney of mother earth, and watching for the successive explosions as they occurred with such marvellous regularity. As the sun, however, was very hot, and caused the reddish brown lava rocks to feel uncomfortable to our feet, we retired to the shelter of a large boulder and ate our lunch, sending on our Aneiteumese natives to the valley, with directions to shout and make signals if we were allowed to descend.

Far below at our feet was a lake that washed the base of the volcano, whose waters find access into its interior through a fissure on the western side; and it is noticed that when the water is low, the eruptions are most violent, which may be accounted for by supposing a greater volume of steam to be generated in proportion to the amount of water

that finds its way into the interior of the mountain.

A high range of hills opposite to us, wooded to their summits, formed the boundary to the valley; thin columns of smoke rising up here and there marked the sites of the native villages.

Presently a shout was heard far below, and two or three natives were seen waving to us,—so, knowing that all was right, we commenced our descent, our feet sinking into the soft volcanic dust, several handfuls of which I put into my haversack.

On reaching the bottom we found ourselves at the fissure which connects the lake with the heart of the volcano, and watched for some minutes the water flowing into this subterraneous passage.

Turning into a cocoa-nut grove at the eastern bend of the lake, we came suddenly upon a crowd of natives numbering at least 150, all armed with bows and arrows, spears and cawasses, the latter being smooth pieces of lava, in shape and size like a small-sized rolling-pin, which would easily break a leg or an arm when thrown in a fight at a considerable distance. Many had muskets with flint locks, and the whole mob looked very warlike. This was rather startling; but no sooner did the chiefs catch sight of Mr. Neilson than they crowded

round him, shaking hands, evincing the greatest pleasure, while two or three darted off to inform the rest of the tribe, and in a short time the women and children, together with several old men, came and joined the party. Mr. Neilson introduced me, stating the object for which I had come, which caused a marked sensation of contentment and satisfaction and renewed hand-shaking.

Taking up our position under the forest trees, I proceeded to extract from them all the information possible, Mr. Neilson acting as interpreter. One of the first I questioned was a lithe, square-shouldered fellow called Yaufangan, *alias* 'Washerwoman.' He was the orator of the chief Yankarubbie, and gained his nickname by having at some time or other undertaken to get washing done for the officers of some man-of-war. He had picked up a little English in his contact with the traders, and used to act as guide up the volcano ; but he and his chief have been driven away from Port Resolution, and for the present his occupation in that line is gone, though by his own account he has taken up another more lucrative, for he stated that he himself had procured twenty-four Tanna men for a man named Hovell, of the ship 'Young Australian,' on the other side of the island, and that they all had agreed to go away

for one yam season, that is, one year. He also confessed to have been round the island in a boat with —— getting natives, and that he had two muskets, ammunition, and some tobacco given him as payment.

On my asking him if he had ever seen violence used by any trader to the Tanna people? he answered, "Yes." He then said he had seen —— forcibly take two men by the hair of their heads and drag them on board his vessel, the '——,' and then point a musket at them to keep them quiet. He knew that —— had stolen a girl, and afterwards sold her for £2 to a Maré man in Australia. He also forcibly seized a boy, but he swam on shore during the night. The father of the boy, named Shunger, was present in the crowd, and on questioning him he corroborated this statement.

Then a man named Nanourou, of the same tribe, came up and complained to me that his son Nurap, about ten years old, was engaged by —— for one year, but he has never come back, although the year has now long gone, and he hears that his son is in the Fijis for three years.

Both Ross Hovell and Hugo Levinger, of the now notorious 'Young Australian,' confessed on one

occasion to Mr. Neilson that they had engaged the natives for one year, but that they had left them in Fiji for three.

From all I could learn from these people themselves, they have been subject to great wrong on the part of unscrupulous agents licensed by the Queensland Government; and in a future chapter I shall condense the evidence from various quarters I have collected during my cruise, as well as that given by other persons.

"Washerwoman" asked Mr. Neilson to come a little further up the valley and see a chief who was thought to be dying, so we followed him about a couple of miles through a beautiful country, until we came to the village where the sick man was.

We found the old warrior lying on a mat in his hut, surrounded by his wives and people; the place was filled with smoke, and the atmosphere was stifling. The chief's dull eyes lit up with pleasure on seeing Mr. Neilson, who sat down and talked with him. Bananas and cocoa-nuts were handed round, and we gave them in return cotton handkerchiefs, woollen night-caps, and knives, which much pleased them.

Mr. Neilson prescribed for the sick man, and many others came round showing their gunshot wounds,

which had been doctored by him some weeks previously. Shortly after we returned down the valley to the south of the volcano by another track, resting at another village, where we were entertained with fruit and dances, all hands turning out to welcome us, and about sunset got down to the harbour, having done a good eighteen miles since we left in the morning.

The portrait opposite is that of a gentleman, who, though a heathen and a cannibal, is not by any means a bad sort of fellow. His appearance is certainly not very prepossessing; but let us remember that old Thakombau of Fiji was no better a few years ago.

As I intended leaving for Erromanga the next morning at daylight, I proceeded to hear more evidence the same evening from some of the people about Port Resolution who had complaints to make, and accordingly several were summoned to attend at the missionary's house.

Nownun, nephew of the principal chief of Port Resolution, was the first who came. He said that three and a half years ago the master of the '——' engaged ten men from his tribe for one year to work in Australia, but not one has yet returned, and he has heard from white men that two are dead. This man also confirmed the statement of "Washer-

woman" about —— having stolen the Tanna girl, as he saw him drag her down to his boat. Also, that —— has often told Tanna men to come alongside his vessel in their canoes and sell their fish, when he steals them and cuts their canoes adrift. He saw —— do this last year in Sulphur Bay. He said —— was a bad man, and wanted me to catch him and "make him fast," which, upon questioning him, I found meant hanging.

I then asked Nownun how it was the Tanna people allowed this scoundrel to carry off their people in this manner, and why they themselves did not "make him fast." He replied that —— kept on board his vessel when he came into Port Resolution, which was not often, and did not venture on shore; that the chiefs on the other side of the island, Nownun's enemies, like him (——), because he gives them plenty of nice things, such as guns, knives, and tobacco.

A man named Kakosi said that in September last the English schooner '——,' (—— master,) with "Charlie" on board as agent, engaged him to pull round the island in a boat to get natives, and he had been paid a musket and ammunition for his services. Charlie engaged thirty men, all willing to go for one year. While on this excursion they fell in with another man, who was fishing in his

canoe off the lee-side of the island. They pulled up to him, when Charlie lugged him into the boat, and then sunk his canoe. He cried very much, and he was not much consoled by their informing him that they were not going to fight him, *but only to steal him.*

Kakosi took a cruise to Erromanga in the '——,' and there he saw Charlie forcibly take off a man from the shore, telling him he was only going to Aneiteum for one year, which was false.

On questioning him as to the treatment of the natives on board the '——,' he said that whenever the schooner anchored, the natives were put under hatches, and that their arms were held while they were on deck during certain occasions, so as to prevent them swimming on shore.

A native of Rotumah, named Mummy, made the following statement to me, which was interpreted to me by Joel, another Rotumah man, who spoke English, and will serve to throw some more light on the proceedings on board the English vessel 'Young Australian,' Albert Ross Hovell, master :—

"Was on board the 'Young Australian,' Hovell master, as one of the crew, in October 1868. Three men were brought on board from Apii Island (New Hebrides) in a boat; only two wished to come, the other jumped overboard and swam away; boat

pulled after him, and Sam (another Rotumah man) took a boat-hook and hooked the swimming man in the face, making a hole through his cheek. They got him into the boat, and flung him down on his back. The second mate, Robert Lennie, a Frenchman, called Bob, was in charge of the boat, and ordered all this to be done. The three men were then taken on board the 'Young Australian,' the master giving them some cloth and mats. They were then sent down into the hold. There were natives already in the hold, from Vaté, Tanna, and Rotumah, but none of them would allow these three men to come to their part of the hold. The wounded man demanded to be put on shore, and tried to get on deck, but was flung back again; he again tried to get up, but was again flung back. A general fight then took place in the hold, and arrows were shot about indiscriminately at both white men and natives; and David, another Rotumah man, was wounded. Heard Hovell call out to make them fast when they came on deck. The second mate, Bob, came aft, and said, 'Take guns and shoot them;' Levinger (the supercargo) said, 'Don't shoot, but make them fast.' They dared not go down into the hold to make them fast, so Levinger then said, 'Shoot them in the legs, but don't kill them.' The three

white men, Bob, Louis, and Antoine, all Frenchmen, had muskets, and so had Jemmy, Rangi, and myself. A light was shown into the hold by means of a stick and cotton, and the three Apii men were shot, dragged on deck, and thrown overboard. Only two were dead—one was still alive when thrown overboard. Never heard Hovell speak, except say, 'Make them fast.' The bodies were thrown overboard by the three Frenchmen. The vessel was at anchor at the time."[1]

Mummy also stated that Netopoonie, *alias* Botan, an Erromangan, was in a boat with the second mate, Robert Lennie, and the latter ordered him to fire, and fired himself, at some natives off Star Island (Banks's group) who had refused to come on board, and had fired arrows at them.

Having got all the statements that were forthcoming, I bade adieu to Mr. and Mrs. Neilson, and pulled on board. The lurid glare from the volcano was plainly visible, although there was so much moon, and the explosions very distinct in the calm quiet night. The 'Rosario' rolled rather heavily during her stay in Port Resolution, owing to the smallness of the harbour, and the swell that came in from the northward.

[1] Hovell and Levinger were both tried for this offence. See Chap. XIV.

CHAPTER VI.

At four o'clock the following morning, the 30th March, we left Port Resolution, passing to leeward of the little island of Niua, and, after a pleasant run of fifty miles, anchored in Dillon's Bay, Erromanga. We felt our way gradually in by the lead, and were within two cables of the beach before soundings were obtained, and seemed unpleasantly close to the shore when we let go the anchor in eleven and a half fathoms, having seventeen under our stern, and not more than one cable from the shore.

Erromanga is associated with many sad memories for Englishmen, being the place where the noble John Williams was murdered, together with Mr. Harris, in November 1839, and again in 1861 Dillon's Bay was the scene of the Gordons' murder. But who can wonder at it? The deeds of the sandal-wood traders, who infested its shores nearly forty years ago, had naturally excited deep feelings of revenge in the breasts of the savage population.

A sandal-wooding party, late in 1839, killed a

great number of the people, and robbed their plantations, which led to the plunder of the 'Cape Packet' shortly after. The proceedings of these lawless ruffians were quite unknown to Mr. Williams when he landed at Dillon's Bay, and there is not a shadow of doubt that his death was caused by their acts. Sandal-wood was at that time in great demand in China, where it is used for temple incense, and it used to fetch from £15 to £20 a ton; but at what a cost it was obtained will never be known until the judgment of the great day.

I pulled on shore to communicate with the Rev. Mr. M'Nair, who with his wife was settled in the house that had belonged to the old sandal-wood establishment. They seemed in very delicate health, as the atmosphere is hot and unwholesome. A fresh-water stream runs down the valley, emptying itself into the bay; its banks are covered with a dense vegetation, the smell of which was overpowering to the senses when first encountering it, and the miasma caused by the river is a deadly poison to the European. The place being quite sheltered from the beneficial effect of the trade-wind renders it a most unfit place for delicate people, and I longed to take them out of it and give them a good sea cruise. The Erromangans are an excessively lazy

and stupid race, darker and more savage-looking than the Tannese, and the M'Nairs have a very uphill task before them. On their arrival they gave the natives fowls, pigs, and different seeds, on the condition that they would allow them to multiply, and they would then be able to sell them; but they have not done so, and have killed them almost all off for their feasts. They have also offered to clothe, educate, and feed the children immediately around the station, if the parents will only send them to school, but only seven have come.

The murderers of the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Gordon have come more than once into the little garden and threatened to kill them.

When I hear all the wicked nonsense that is talked about missionaries, and the sneer that often accompanies it, I wax angry. Doubtless the sketches of the missionary settlement look very pretty on paper, but unfortunately there are some things you cannot portray, such as insufficient food, brackish water, together with swarms of mosquitoes and other insects, and often, as at Dillon's Bay, a sweltering, poisonous atmosphere, accompanied by fever and ague.

The missionary schooner is often delayed on her annual trip; then the stores of flour, etc., are at a

very low ebb, and frequently injured by the damp, and the sugar swarming with ants. An English labourer would often turn up his nose at their daily fare.

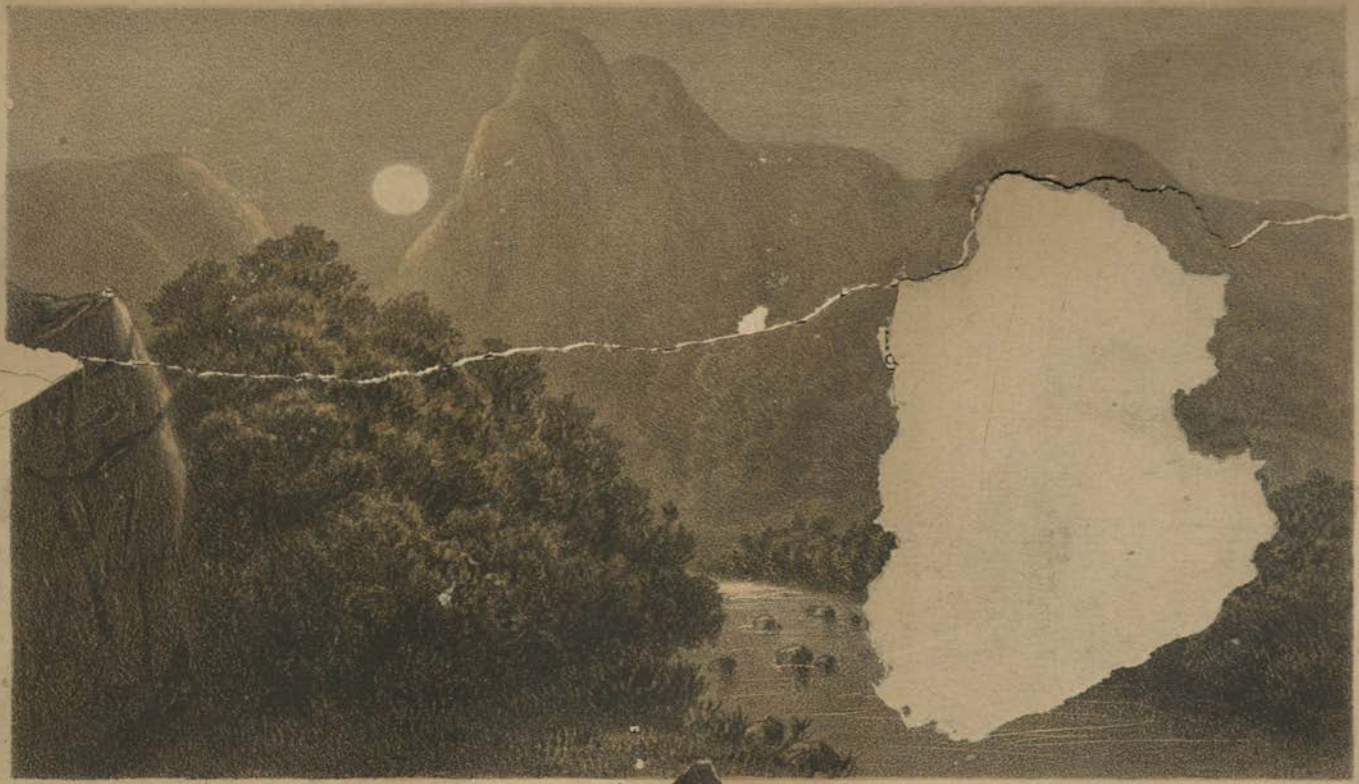
All these things cannot be put into a sketch of a two-roomed cottage under the shade of a cocoa-nut grove, with beautifully wooded hills as a background, Mr. and Mrs. Missionary in American rocking-chairs in front, seemingly with nothing on earth to trouble them.

But look at the real side of the picture, and see these noble men and women, who have in every age gone forth from their country and friends, often bearing their lives in their hands, to do their Master's bidding, and preach the glorious gospel of Christ to the heathen ; living alone, to all intents and purposes, in a strange land—often in an unhealthy climate, and frequently surrounded by savages who have murdered their predecessors, and may perhaps kill them. But these things they think little of ; they count not their lives dear unto them ; what concerns them most is to see the little work they have been permitted to do among these savages, after weeks and months of prayer and patience, dashed to the ground and indefinitely thrown back by the shameful acts of their own countrymen. Whether in the Sandwich Islands or New Zealand, amongst the Society, Fiji, or New

Hebrides groups, I have ever found them the same earnest God-fearing men, striving to their utmost to win souls amongst those who but for them would never hear of the "glad tidings of great joy." They require no advocacy from me however; I only ask those who are so fond of running down missionaries, to think a little, and not talk ignorantly and wickedly about men and women whose lives adorn some of the brightest pages of British history.[1]

I appointed the following morning for the examination of those chiefs and others who were in a position to give evidence as to kidnapping, and Mr. M'Nair kindly asked me to breakfast with him. Although it was a lovely night I thought it prudent to keep the fires banked, as we were so close to the shore. A delicious aromatic odour came off with the land breeze, cool and pleasant after the heat of the day. A thin column of blue smoke rose here

[1] I once heard a very high compliment paid to a stranger clergyman who happened to be preaching for his friend, not a hundred miles from Southsea Common. The sermon was a plain straightforward gospel one, and I could see it was evidently not what the congregation were accustomed to, as glances of indignant surprise and displeasure were exchanged by several ancient damsels seated near me, such as may be found in every congregation, being easily recognisable by their superior knowledge in spiritual things, as well as their rapid growth in every Christian virtue. On leaving the church their anger found a vent, and as they swept past in righteous indignation one expressed her surprise at Mr. —— allowing such a man to preach in his pulpit, upon which the other answered, "Yes, indeed, my dear; I took him for a missionary."



UP THE RIVER ERROMANGA.

and there among the trees, and nothing disturbed the dreamy quietness of the scene save the occasional scream of a solitary sea-bird on its way home, the croaking of the bull-frogs on shore, or the splash made by fish which now and then might be seen springing from the water in pursuit of insects.

The next day after breakfast I walked up the valley to a short distance, following the course of the stream that flows down from the interior of the island over brown and grey boulders of volcanic rock. It is navigable at high tide for boats, and our two cutters had been sent in the morning-watch to water; but it was slow work, and much time was lost owing to their taking in too much at first, and grounding,—consequently the earlier loads were very small.

I made some rough sketches of the valley, but it would have required a cleverer hand than mine to do justice to its beautiful scenery. It being intensely hot, and no air to be got except by climbing the hills that overhang the station, we soon went back to the house. On returning, we passed one of our cutters aground, and waiting for the tide, the crew of which were bathing under the shade of the trees: the contrast of their fair skins to those of the almost black Erromangans was

very remarkable, and took me back to my old West India days.

Several natives being by this time assembled, I requested Mr. M'Nair to interpret for me.

Numpunara and Loetevon, both under-chiefs of Dillon's Bay, complained to me that in September 1868 a vessel called off the north end of the island, with "Charlie" on board; they wanted sandal-wood, and offered plenty of tobacco. Some canoes went alongside the vessel, when immediately ten natives were forcibly seized and hauled on board, and the vessel sailed away.

Narufu, a Christian, also stated that the 'King Oscar,' with "Charlie" as agent, anchored in Dillon's Bay, and enticed on board five natives with offers of tobacco; the vessel then sailed for Queensland.

Mr. M'Nair said that numbers of the people had been taken away by the traders, and that in most if not in all cases they were seduced on board by false promises of tobacco, etc., and that they do not understand anything about engagements.

He told me that on the 16th of February last, a small vessel anchored in the bay during the night, and sailed in the morning. He afterwards heard from the natives that "Charlie" was on board her, and had managed to get six natives; three, however,

jumped overboard, and swam ashore just as she was under weigh; nothing more has been heard of the others.

Again, on the 6th February the '——' took away seven natives, south of Dillon's Bay. They however went of their own accord, but under what promises or engagements none of their tribe can tell.

A woman named Walapo, the widow of a Malay called Rangi, and daughter of the principal chief of Dillon's Bay, came down from one of the other islands in the '——,' (—— master,) with "Charlie" on board as agent. She said, while off Noras, on the west side of the island, "Charlie" got hold of nine Erromangans by telling them he had plenty of pigs on board for their coming feast—very fat ones, also plenty of tobacco. He took them off to the vessel in his own boat, but shortly after they wanted to return on shore, when he put them down below under hatches. She said they cried a good deal.

This woman's story corroborates a complaint that Mr. M'Nair made in a letter to Commodore Lambert, dated 22d October 1868.

A Christian native named Atuelo Mackie, who assisted Mr. M'Nair in his translations of the Bible,

said that in November 1868 "Charlie" got two Erromangans in the following manner:—He pulled into the coast about six miles south of Dillon's Bay, but where it was quite impossible for a boat to land. He hailed four men on shore, saying that he had plenty of tobacco for them on board his vessel if they swam out, which they did. He caught hold of two, and dragged them into his boat, but the others swam back and escaped.

Another Christian native called Naempeum, who was under-chief of Cook's Bay, Erromanga, complained that about a month before the schooner '——' was at Dillon's Bay, a vessel called off Cook's Bay, with the ubiquitous "Charlie" on board. She did not anchor, but sent a boat on shore under pretence of giving them pigs and tobacco, and eleven natives were carried away.

Mr. M'Nair told me he believed this vessel was the '——,' as the occurrence took place on the 3d July 1868.

Naempeum also stated that he had warned his men not to go off, but in the present instance "Charlie" falsely told them that Captain Jo (Joseph Hastings) was on board.

This man was, or is, in command of a small schooner, and is much liked by the Erromangans on

account of his kind treatment of them. "Charlie" well knew this, and took advantage of his name to entice the natives on board.

Not a single native that has been taken away from Erromanga has ever come back. It is the old story of cruelty and injustice, which is bearing such bitter fruit to many devoted men and women who amongst these islands are labouring to turn these poor heathens from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. They know no fear, but, trusting in the Divine help, will yet, despite the obstacles that are strewn in their path by those who are supposed to know better, open a door for the gospel, as their brethren have done in other places before them.

Mr. and Mrs. M'Nair came off in my gig to take a look at the 'Rosario,' and expressed much delight with all they saw. They left about sunset, landing just as the officers' boat was leaving the shore, and they told me afterwards that it was quite melancholy to see the two standing arm-in-arm all alone watching the boat pull off to the ship.[1]

[1] While this book is preparing for publication, the author is grieved to see the death of Mr. M'Nair, not however wholly unexpected by him, as he noticed the injurious effect the climate was having upon his health.

His wife and fellow-labourer may be sure of the sympathy of the "Rosario's," as well as of all that knew her.

At 6 P.M. we were once more under weigh. The moon was rising, throwing the old sandal-wooders' haunt into a dark shade, and as we drew slowly out from the shore with a gentle land-breeze, the graves of the Gordons could be distinctly seen glistening in the silver light,—no bad omen, let us trust, for that time when the light of the glorious gospel of Christ shall shine into the hearts of these poor islanders.

CHAPTER VII.

JOGGING along under easy sail all night with a fair wind, we saw the island of Vaté ahead of us at daylight, and in another hour observed the low peninsula of Pango. Rounding this, the wind failed, and steam was got up, when shortly after we entered the snug little harbour of Vila, anchoring in eleven and a half fathoms, the least depth of water we could find without swinging too near the shore.

The Rev. Mr. Cosh shortly after came off in a whale boat. He lives on the peninsula, and thus has the benefit of the sea-breeze.

No natives have been forcibly taken off from this part of the island, but the same complaint is made by the relatives of those who have voluntarily gone away for one year, as far back as 1867, that they have never returned, and their people do not know where they are. Some time ago one man did come back from Australia, after three years' absence, and found his wife living with another man. A serious disturbance took place in consequence, which kept

the whole settlement at Pango in alarm for many days.

Four men left voluntarily for Tahiti some time previous to November 1866, for one year, but they have not come back. The crew of the vessel that took them were white, but did not speak English, so the natives say; if this was a French vessel, it is the only instance I have heard of natives having been taken to Tahiti from the New Hebrides.

Numerous canoes were soon alongside the ship with bananas, cocoa-nuts, and a few yams; but as the season has only just commenced we did not get many of the latter.

The Vatése appear more intelligent than the Erromangans, though similar in colour and general appearance—perhaps a shade lighter.

This is a lovely island, and has another capital harbour called after H.M.S. 'Havannah,' but my orders did not include it; moreover, my time was short. The island covers about the same area as Erromanga, but is of a different shape, being longer, running from N.W. to S.E. It is beautifully wooded, with a large proportion of table-land, which, if cultivated, would yield a splendid return.

Vila harbour has its drawbacks, having too great a depth of water close to its shores all round; and

the fresh-water stream that flows into it is very difficult to get at, owing to the coral reefs, which prevent large boats from getting near enough to it.

During our stay here a large party was sent to the bottom of the harbour inside the reef to haul the seine, and caught grey and red mullet enough for all hands.

It was a pretty sight watching the officers and blue-jackets up to their necks in the water clearing the net from the coral in which it often became entangled, and then hauling in on both ends with a rattling good sea song, that made the woods resound again; to see the imprisoned fish jumping up, trying to escape (often successfully) from their prison, which was slowly and surely getting smaller and smaller, until at last they were hauled up high and dry amidst the final shouts of their captors.

There was a delightful little spot about a quarter of a cable from the stream, which ran up a little creek with beautiful clear deep water, cut off from the rest by a sand spit. It was here the fires were lit for cooking the fish, the men bringing their hook pots filled with tea from the ship. The trees overshadowing the place formed a shelter from the showers that frequently fell, rendering it dry and

snug, and after several good hauls, all hands would congregate round the fires and eat their supper, keeping the mosquitoes away with many a well-filled pipe; but there was no getting rid of the sand-flies, which stung and tormented us unceasingly. Many of the men would prefer taking to the water, where they might be seen enjoying their smoke at peace, until the boatswain's pipe would summon them to one more haul before going off to the ship.

My dog Punch on these occasions would be quite in his element, rushing about in a state of the greatest excitement, barking at the fish as the seine came to the beach, splashing about in the water with the men, and firmly believing he was rendering the most valuable assistance to the party.

It was only on these occasions he was allowed to land at the island, as a small dog belonging to the Commodore had fallen a victim to the gross appetites of the Erromangans. It appears he had been chasing some fowls belonging to the people, for which he was reproved, but perhaps expecting something more practical, ran away down towards the beach, and was taking to the water to swim off to the 'Challenger' when a stone from a native killed him, just on the other side of the stream where John Williams fell.

I found the position of Letiki island inside the harbour considerably out, but owing to the rainy weather could only make a rough sextant survey of it; the north end was nearly a cable too far to the southward; also the reef at the northern entrance to the harbour extends three quarters of a cable further out to the westward.

I paid a visit to Mr. and Mrs. Cosh with Dr. Roche, whose presence was requested to see their little boy, who was not well. We pulled outside the harbour and landed upon a sandy beach on the north side of Pango peninsula, where we found a native guide awaiting us. From the open beach to the forest was only a stride, and we struck across the broad strip by a narrow path completely sheltered from the sun, arriving at the mission-house on the other side in about a quarter of an hour.

Mr. Cosh and his wife and child inhabit a two-roomed little cottage, well thatched, and white-washed inside, the fittings of which he has put up with his own hands, having got window-sashes and doors from Australia. It was deliciously cool, the sea-breeze blowing strongly right upon it. Several native huts are scattered round about, forming a little settlement. It is the healthiest I have seen since leaving Aneiteum.

After dinner we walked about the little place, and saw several of the natives, with a Samoan woman and her daughter; their handsome dark olive complexion and straight black hair formed a marked contrast to the dark-skinned Vatése, with their woolly heads.

The dancing-place at Pango consists of an open space; in the centre are placed trunks of trees, upright and hollowed out, all of different sizes, being cut open something after the fashion of a violin; on being struck with a piece of wood they emit a dull monotonous though varied sound, according to their different dimensions.

The mission is slowly progressing, but Mr. Cosh, like his brethren on Tanna and Erromanga, feels that he is living here only on sufferance.

On the morning of the 5th April we steamed out of Vila harbour, Mr. Cosh coming off early in the morning with some letters for Sydney, and a bottle of goat's milk, which Mrs. Cosh had sent me. I towed his whale-boat round the peninsula, but as there was a pretty fresh breeze, and a lop of a sea on, he was soon obliged to cast her off, waving his hat in adieu; and thus we parted from the last island of the New Hebrides that my orders directed me to visit. At 9.30 A.M. we made sail, and raised the

screw. The wind hung to the eastward more than we had reason to expect; the consequence was, we stood to the northward as far as lat. 14° S., and long. 174° E., before we tacked, so as to escape the influence of the Fiji group; and we were right in our conclusions, for on the 9th, after tacking, about sunset it came on squally, with a shift of wind from the N.E., when, after taking in a reef, we made a good lay to the southward.

On the 11th the wind began to fall light, as we were now under the lee of Viti Levu, although some 200 miles off. The next day was a dead calm, and we caught a small shark about seven feet long. There is always great excitement when this happens, although, of course, of frequent occurrence in the tropics.

When one is observed the boatswain's yeoman and the ship's steward are in instant request, the former for the shark-hook, which is supplied to every man-of-war, and the latter for a 4-lb. piece of pork to bait it with. One of the small ropes is bent to the three-feet piece of chain that is connected with the hook, and then thrown well out on the weather quarter. Soon we see the cautious monster smelling at it, together with one or two little blue pilot-fish which

generally accompany him. If he is hungry, it is not long before the white of his belly is seen as he turns over to swallow it; in another moment he is hooked, and then all hands are up to see him played and got on board. Darting about from side to side, he is now and then allowed to dash away as far as the rope will let him, and then gradually hauled in till he is brought close under the counter exhausted; a running bow-line is then made round the line with a stouter rope, which is dexterously slipped down over his head, and then well manned; he is thus soon roused in over the taffrail with the caution of "Stand from under;" lashing out with his huge tail right and left, everybody keeping clear of him until a handspike from the after pivot-gun partially disables him, much to the wrath of the gunner, who says the boatswain's handspikes are supplied for that sort of work, at which the latter grins.

The place of execution is generally the lee-gangway, when a sharp-pointed knife inserted about a foot from his head penetrates his heart, severing also the vertebra, and instantly paralysing him. The flesh is coarse and rank,—for I remember as a midshipman once tasting one in the West Indies, but have never repeated the experiment. One huge

monster we caught in the Gulf of Mexico measured seventeen feet, if I recollect right; the jaws went over the head and shoulders of the biggest man in the ship.

The calm continuing, I got up steam, and at sunset saw the high land of Viti Levu, Fiji, on the port-beam. It is a high mountainous island, and the largest of the group.

Next morning, saw Mount Washington, Kandavu Island, right ahead. We were greatly puzzled at the height of this mountain as given by Commodore Wilkes of the United States Exploring Expedition, for he makes it 3800 feet. Consequently at noon, having determined accurately our latitude and longitude, a base was run by patent log, and the usual sextant angles and bearings being taken at either end, the height was found to be only 2600 feet.

Passed between Kandavu and Vatulele Islands, and found the small islets to the north of the former were considerably out of position; but Captain Denham of the Royal Navy did not survey this island of the group.

A little after midnight I hove-to, not being sure of the currents between the numerous islands; proceeding ahead again at daylight, and after passing

between Gau and Mbakiki, sighted the island of Ovalau, looking like Madeira in miniature, with the addition of cocoa-nuts and bread-fruit trees.

A little after ten o'clock, on the forenoon of the 16th April, we entered the reef abreast the settlement of Levuka, anchoring in fourteen and a half fathoms.

CHAPTER VIII.

In 1643 Tasman discovered the beautiful archipelago of Fiji, consisting of upwards of 200 islands, large and small, the principal ones being Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. The group lies between lat. 15° 30′ and 19° 30′ s., and long. 177° e. and 178° w., being about 1200 miles north of Auckland, New Zealand.

In 1835, the Wesleyan mission, consisting of two members, landed at Lakeba, from the Friendly or Tonga Islands, which lie 250 miles to the south-eastward of the Fijis.

The inhabitants call these islands Viti, but owing to the Tonga teachers being unable to pronounce the letter "v," the word has become corrupted to Fiji.

There is hardly one of the group that is not encircled with a coral reef, having several openings through which the largest ships may enter with the greatest ease, especially at low water, when the tops of the reefs are more distinct, many blocks of coral washed up by the ocean being visible.

I found here a different race, and a different state

of things existing; men are not taken from these islands, but brought to them; as, unfortunately, no flag is flying over this central group, the planters have it in their power to do virtually what they please. The consul, indeed, has tried to regulate the traffic, but, as he cannot be ubiquitous, it is needless to say he does not succeed, and as most of the planters own a small island to their own cheek, they are monarchs of all they survey.

I found Mr. John B. Thurston, the acting English consul, was at the island of Taviune, but expected back the following day.

A terrific hurricane had been raging over these islands on the 5th March, the very day when we arrived at New Caledonia,—a fact which may perhaps account for the extraordinary appearance of the atmosphere at that place. The barometer at Levuka showed 28·8 inches, while on the Rewa river, Viti Levu, it was 28·4 in. Houses were unroofed and plantations destroyed. An iron barque called the 'Ellesmere' was blown over the reef into a cocoa-nut grove, and there remains. Most of the houses have had, since this, corrugated iron roofs, secured with chains passed over them to strong stakes driven into the ground.

Levuka consists of a row of small houses facing

the beach—in fact on it, as the hills rise abruptly from the water's edge. Every third house is a pot-shop, and the scenes that take place here every day are certainly uncommon elsewhere, except, perhaps, in some of the far west settlements in America, while the Central Pacific Railroad was being made, where the ruffian and rowdy held their court for a time, until the citizens got too strong for them and cleared them off. Thus it will be here in due time: the respectable class of settlers, who are fast accumulating, will take the law into their own hands for the safety of their lives and property, and make Levuka too hot for the seedy villains from the New Zealand and Australian colonies.

I remember how well the Vigilance Committee worked at San Francisco in 1856, clearing off the rowdies in splendid style, after which they quietly resigned their self-constituted power. It was a necessity forced upon them, and doubtless will be forced upon many a community, which, by the force of circumstances, is obliged to receive loafers and ruffians of every conceivable shade and hue.

Some of the planters settled in these islands are gentlemen, with whom I had the pleasure of becoming acquainted; others, and at present, I am sorry to say, the majority, are the biggest scoundrels unhung.

As an instance of the deeds which are perpetrated by this latter class, perhaps the following incident, which happened shortly before my arrival, is about the most horrible :—

Two planters (not Englishmen) had been in the habit of flogging their natives (Fijian), and rubbing the juice of the Chili pepper into their backs afterwards; sometimes they would use nettles for this purpose. One day, a native woman who had displeased one of these men with whom she had been living, was tied to a tree, and her great toes cut off with a hammer and chisel. In consequence of this, her tribe made a descent upon the plantation, destroying the houses, and fifty bales of ginned sea island cotton, together with all the machinery, winding up with killing and eating, not the two ruffians themselves unfortunately, but two of the half-caste children; and yet one of these white civilizers had the audacity to go to Sydney and ask for assistance to revenge himself!

Another little episode that had taken place only a few months ago, illustrates the extraordinary ideas that exist in a certain class of men with regard to natives in general.

One day there arrived at Viti Levu two men who stated that they came from Melbourne, and

informed the astonished natives that a certain large tract of land, where their village stood, was their property, that they had purchased so many thousand acres, which they had come down to take possession of, and requested them to clear out at once. In this very modest demand they of course refused to acquiesce, upon which these Melbourne speculators set fire to the village the following day and burned it down. This being also objected to, the natives seized them; but having been warned by the English consul several times not to take the law into their own hands, but to inform him of anything they had to complain of, they simply gave them a good thrashing. On escaping from their hands, these two individuals went up to the top of a neighbouring hill, and, with repeating rifles, assisted by field-glasses, had some very pretty practice on the natives of both sexes, until the place became too hot to hold them, when they disappeared in the same mysterious manner they had come.

Mr. Thurston having arrived from Taviune, I proceeded to settle several little affairs in which his authority had been set at nought, and had to talk to several individuals in the language of the poets.

One man, who was unusually troublesome, I threatened to take in irons to Sydney, which had the desired effect of soothing the complaint he was labouring under.

Cheap native labour is as much wanted in the Fijis as in Queensland, and a great rivalry has naturally sprung up between them; consequently the importers of *voluntary* immigrants drive a roaring trade, and while the planters in this group gnash their teeth at the Queenslanders, the latter do not hesitate to accuse the former of countenancing slavery, which is the old story of the pot calling the kettle black.

Fiji native labour is not to be had except at the bidding of the chiefs, and as many of the planters live on islands quite separate from each other, having no native population, they have to import it.

The two large islands are thickly populated, but little or no help can be obtained from them, as the majority are ferocious cannibals, and it is impossible to penetrate even the mountainous country inhabited by the "Devil chiefs" and their people. Captain Jones, the late consul, and Mr. Thurston have succeeded in making their way for a certain distance, but it was at the risk of their lives. Again, here as at the New Hebrides, the natives will not, as a rule,

work, or perform any menial occupation on their own island, and thus the planters are driven elsewhere for labour; *how* they get it is another thing.

The Kingsmill, or Line Islands, north of the Fijis, supply the principal number of *free* labourers, as they are nearer in point of time than the New Hebrides, which are dead to leeward. Cargoes of the latter people have however been run across in tolerably good condition at certain seasons of the year, and, as in the case of the 'Young Australian,' the skippers have realized a handsome profit.

As I intended examining some of these imported natives myself on some of the plantations, I accepted Mr. Thurston's offer to spend a night at his place on the other side of the island, and started with him the following morning for a pull round the west end of Ovalau, Mrs. Thurston accompanying us. Our course lay inside the reef, between coral patches, and we had a good opportunity of observing the beauties of the island, as the day was lovely. After rounding the west point, and passing a small island, we saw the high land of Viti Levu, and, coasting along, about noon entered the mouth of a narrow river; the trees grew so thick and so close to the water's edge that only with a knowledge of the place could any one suspect its existence. As we followed

its winding course, with the thick tropical vegetation forming a dense screen all around, I could not help calling to mind the old pirate haunts, and how effectually concealed would be a band of desperadoes in such a place. But half an hour more brought us to Bureta, and my gig's crew were not sorry to make the boat fast and get their dinners.

After resting some time, and landing Mrs. Thurston, we pulled down the river, and a little further to the eastward landed at the foot of the Wai-dau plantation, owned by Mr. Boyd. Ascending a very steep and slippery path that led to the house, we took our way to the native huts to question some of the Kingsmill people, but found we were powerless, no interpreter being at hand; but we arranged that some of the most intelligent should be sent that same evening over to Bureta, where "Jemmy," their fellow-countryman, was working, and who would act as interpreter.

The huts appeared comfortable enough, being large and airy compared with those they inhabit on their own islands. While we were here, in bounced a virago, and, after looking intently at Mr. Boyd and myself, began abusing us most vigorously, and intimating that the men should not be taken away; several other women who had been absent for water

now came in and joined her in slanging us, pouring forth a torrent of the choicest Kingsmill Billingsgate; but the consul, who knew something of the language, pacified them, and they seemed much ashamed of their outburst.

Returning to Bureta we took a walk through the cotton plantation, consisting of several acres. The plants were about the height of a good-sized raspberry bush, and the coming crop evidently promised well, for already some of the numerous pods were bursting, showing the beautiful white sea-island cotton.

At dinner Mrs. Thurston gave us a Tongan dish called Palosami, consisting of taro-tops and scraped cocoa-nut, chopped up together and baked in a native earth oven; it has a peculiarly delicate flavour, and is far superior to the best sort of spinach.

The natives having come over from Wai-dau, and Jemmy being in attendance, I began by asking him some questions.

He is a native of Perout (Kingsmills), and came to Fiji in the schooner '——,' under the following circumstances:—When the vessel made her appearance off the island, he went on board to sell mats and fowls, and towards sunset he was told by the

white men that as it was late he could sleep on board. There were between sixty and seventy of them, besides fifteen women. They went down into the hold and slept there, but in the morning found the vessel at sea, no land being in sight. Mr. ——, the supercargo, told them not to be alarmed, as they were only going to another island close to ; but they were all brought on to Makongai, Fiji. It was not until they arrived there that he was told they were to stop thirty moons to work, and then be paid and taken back.

They were then distributed to different planters who wanted labour, and he was sent with some others to Nananu, Viti Levu, where he murdered another native, and was sent over to the consul as a prisoner. He had been working amicably enough alongside his victim, until one day another native said to him, "How is it you are friends with that man ? why, he killed your brother some time ago ;" whereupon the "avenger of blood," according to the Malay fashion, immediately got a knife and stuck him.

Mr. Thurston does not very well know what to do with him, as he is a sort of prisoner at large, but is a capital hand in a boat, and is very contented at present, as he quite understands his position. He

told me, however, that all his countrymen want to go home, and that they do not like Fiji.

Mr. Boyd said they were quite unfit for agricultural labour (with a very few exceptions), as they cannot work, not being accustomed to any manual exercise, and he is now sorry he ever engaged any; this has been his first experience of them, and he will be glad when they all go back.

Mr. Thurston said that on their own islands they have nothing but cocoa-nuts and fish; neither yams nor taro to plant, and as a rule they do not wish to leave their own islands.

Malawa, a native of Nukulau (Kingsmills), stated that he went on board the '——' to sell mats, and stopped on board all night, as it was late; in the morning the ship was a long way off the land, and the master told them they were going to Fiji; a good many of his people, both men and women, were on board, and they cried a great deal.

Q. "Did the captain make any agreement with you?"

A. "No; the captain say I pay you when I get to Fiji,—did not want to come to Fiji."

Q. "Are you content since you have been at Fiji?"

A. "No like Fiji; (making a sign of putting a rope round his neck) hang myself if I stop here long."

Q. "Why don't you like Fiji?"

A. "Don't like work."

Q. "Have you plenty to eat?"

A. "Plenty."

Q. "Have you been well treated since you came to Fiji?"

A. "Yes; I like the white man I work for" (Mr. Boyd).

Another native of the Kingsmill group, from Onoutau, named Kaurak, said that on another occasion he went on board the '——' to barter; he wanted to get tobacco, with several other men and nine women; but no sooner were they on board than they were sent down below and the hatches shut on them, and their canoes cut adrift. He did not want to come to Fiji, and it was not until he got there that he was told he must work for thirty moons.

These poor creatures are very different from the Fijimen or those from the New Hebrides, as they inhabit small islands right on the equator,—their food consisting of fish, cocoa-nuts, and a few fowls. They are of Malay origin, sulky and revengeful, and quite unfit for the sort of labour required of them.

I ascertained that the outburst of wrath against me by the women at Wai-dau, was caused by their

having taken me for a kidnapper, who was supposed to be bargaining with Mr. Boyd for their lords and masters, as they had been already twice removed since their abduction.

In the evening, about 400 men, women, and children assembled at the consul's house to do honour to himself and his guest, by performing a series of dances. Some were natives of the soil, others from Vaté, who seemed very happy and contented. They were all soon to be returned to their homes, and Mrs. Thurston said she did not know what she should do when her majordomo left.

The Fiji club-dance is very fine, consisting of a constant interchange of files of men, who stand in rows armed with their formidable weapons. At certain parts of the measure these are brought down with great force lengthwise to the ground together. About a couple of dozen men stood a little on one side, who yelled and howled in turns to a sort of skull and thigh-bone accompaniment, under the directions of the old chief himself—a second one acting as master of the ceremonies.

Then the Vaté men followed with their national dance, which was performed without clubs, but they made up for it in clapping of hands and grunting.

These Fijians are a fine race, and quite come up

to the Maoris of New Zealand in point of physique, but lack their intelligence; they are however very warlike, and the cannibal tribes on the mountains of Viti Levu are fierce, and fight well. They showed a good front against the boats of a certain man-of-war that had been sent up the Rewa river to make, as it turned out, only a demonstration,—orders being given to the commanding officer to fire over and not on the natives; the result was, that the expedition did an infinity of harm, and is deeply deplored by every one.

If it is necessary sometimes to punish savage tribes, let it be done properly; don't skylark with them, as any leniency displayed by an armed force once fairly sent against them is sure to be put down to fear, and the Rewa tribes now openly say, and say truly, that they beat the boats off.

I made friends with the jolly fat little copper-coloured piccaninnies, and was sorry I had no *dulces* to give them, but they would in all probability have preferred some raw fish instead.

These people are very conservative. A chief was one day going over a mountain-path, followed by a long string of his people, when he happened to stumble and fall; all the rest of the people immediately did the same, except one man, who was

instantly set upon by the rest, to know whether he considered himself better than his chief.

My boat's crew were in clover here. A pig was slaughtered for their especial benefit, and eaten with any amount of yams and taro, besides plenty of fish and tobacco.

After the chiefs had swallowed a stiff glass of grog, they and their followers gradually dispersed, when we turned in.

CHAPTER IX.

Her Britannic Majesty's consul for Fiji and Tonga has about as difficult a billet as any gentleman in the diplomatic line, or indeed any other. No flag flies over the former of these groups, no native king exists as at the Tonga Islands, and consequently no laws restrain or regulate the community; everybody does precisely what he pleases, which renders these islands a most delightful resort for every variety of villains from the neighbouring colonies.

Here congregate the Melbourne sharper and the Sydney defaulter, and all the Pariahs belonging to the heterogeneous society so thickly sprinkled along the sea-board of the Australian continent—creatures too bad even for it. But amongst these wretches a few gentlemen have of late years thought it worth their while to come, attracted by the facility of growing sea-island cotton, and who have not had sufficient capital to start profitably in Australia or New Zealand.

Let me in passing give a word of advice to those parents who think the colonies are the best places for their sons, and who imagine that three or four thousand pounds put into the hands of a raw youth fresh from school or college, is sufficient to start him in life in New Zealand or Australia.

The publication of the "Handbook or Guide to the Britain of the South" has had unlooked-for consequences. However true its statements may have been twenty years ago, they are certainly inapplicable now. The continued Maori war in New Zealand has ruined the north island, and the depreciation of wool, combined with the war expenses, has left the south island in no better condition.[1] Several gentlemen, ex-officers of the army, have told me that, misled by the above-mentioned publication, and by no fault of their own, they found themselves obliged to take refuge in the armed constabulary for bread to eat. Some have taken to selling grog, others, and not a few, to drinking it; in fact, unless a young man has a large capital, say from £8000 to £10,000, and, above all, strongly fixed principles, he ought not to be sent to either Australia or New Zealand; and I would sooner see a boy of mine breaking stones and living on bread and cheese in England, than sever him from

[1] In 1869. I trust, however, that this is only temporary.

his home influences by sending him out to get what is called "colonial experience."

Although in the Fijis gentlemen are in the minority, they do contrive to strengthen the hands of Her Majesty's representative, so that he is enabled now and then to lay hold of a robber or a murderer, and give him a dry dozen, or send him in irons to Sydney,—that is to say, if he can get an obliging master of a merchant vessel to take him, failing the presence of a man-of-war. The visits of our cruisers are necessarily few and far between, seeing that there are only four for the whole of Australia and New Zealand, besides the Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, and New Hebrides groups: and in consequence of this, the well-disposed part of the community, who wish to sleep quietly in their beds, are compelled to resort to rough and extraordinary measures.

On returning to Levuka a deputation of planters waited on me with a request that I would lay down some regulations with regard to the native labour question, handing me the following letter:—

"FIJI, *April 20th*, 1869.

"SIR,—We, the undersigned, as representatives of the planters and others in Fiji, beg to address you on the subject of the foreign labour question.

"Malicious, false, and party reports having been circulated

throughout the Australian colonies, charging us with kidnapping natives of the South Sea Islands,—this we repudiate with indignation, and now most strenuously desire that you will at once investigate our system of obtaining labour, and the treatment of such labourers, and further, to lay down regulations which will in future prevent such reports finding credence.—We are, Sir, your obedient servants,

F. W. Hennings.
D. M. Campbell.
W. & E. Reece.
J. Fred. Wilson.
W. Scott.
George Lee.
R. Ryder.

"To G. Palmer, Esq., Commander of
H.M. Ship, 'Rosario.'"

I reminded these gentlemen that to a great extent the remedy lay with themselves, and that it was not surprising the reports they spoke of appeared in the Australian papers, since horrible acts of cruelty had been committed by certain planters of Fiji, and that I was surprised a public meeting had not been held to condemn them. But as no denial had been given, or any attempt made to satisfy the public that these shameful proceedings only emanated from the lowest class among them, it was quite natural that the character of all the planters in the Fiji Islands should suffer.

I also reminded them that several weeks would be

necessary to do what they wished, and that the time at my disposal was limited to days; I suggested that they themselves might lay down clear and simple regulations which would insure the traffic being carried on properly, but that they must on all occasions act energetically to strengthen the hands of the consul, whether it suited their individual convenience or not,—for as yet this had not been done, Mr. Thurston having complained that at the present time two vessels were away after natives without a license, and that every native I had as yet examined complained of having been kidnapped.

In consequence of this interview a public meeting was held, at which several loafers tried to make themselves heard, but were summarily put down. Of course I was not present, but some of the officers gave a very amusing account of the proceedings. One individual in the middle of it all gravely moved, "that this 'ere meeting do adjourn for a drink, it being d—d hot."

The following five resolutions, however, were passed :—

1. Proposed by Mr. F. W. Hennings, and seconded by Mr. A. Hamilton—"That a committee of seven be appointed to draw up a memorial to the Earl of Belmore, praying him to forward the same to the

Home Government, for the purpose of explaining our present system of labour, and the mode of obtaining the same for Fiji, requesting that the consul may be empowered to supervise the introduction of foreign labour; and that a letter be addressed to his Lordship with reference to certain abuses alleged to have been committed."

2. Proposed by Mr. J. T. Smith, and seconded by Mr. F. W. Hennings,—"That the following gentlemen form the committee:—Mr. F. W. Hennings, Mr. J. F. Wilson, Mr. W. Scott, Mr. Stewart Lee, Mr. William Hennings, Mr. J. T. Smith, and Mr. M. Moore."

3. Proposed by Mr. F. W. Hennings, and seconded by Mr. J. T. Smith,—"That the planters of Fiji form a body to draw up a code regulating the hours of labour, the food, accommodation, and wages of all South Sea Islanders employed in Fiji; and that two commissioners be appointed for the purpose of periodically inspecting the various plantations, and to enforce the code formed."

4. Proposed by Mr. Rupert Ryder, and seconded by Mr. G. H. Holmes,—"That this meeting desires to express its indignation at any abuses that may have been committed, either by masters of vessels or by employers of foreign labour in these islands; and that it is its earnest wish to have the mode of in-

troducing labour placed on a system of proper supervision."

5. Proposed by Mr. A. Hamilton, and seconded by Mr. G. H. Holmes,—"That this meeting desires the committee to consider what means had best be adopted to collect the opinions of the planters and employers of foreign labour on the question of the selection of commissioners."

On the 24th April the deputation again came to request me to present the memorial to Lord Belmore, on my arrival in Sydney, to which I consented, sending them the following answer :—

"H.M.S. 'Rosario,'
Levuka, 24*th April* 1869.

"Gentlemen,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th instant; also a memorial to his Excellency the Earl of Belmore; and I can assure you that the latter shall be presented by myself to His Excellency.

"As public attention, both at home and abroad, is now directed to the Polynesian free-labour question, I need hardly say how well timed your memorial is, as it will show that the European planters of Fiji are endeavouring, by every possible means, to place this system of labour under proper supervision, and that they have no sympathy with kidnapping natives, or treating them unfairly.—I have the honour to be, Gentlemen, your obedient servant,

Geo. Palmer,
Commander, R.N.

"To Messrs. Hennings, Campbell, and Wilson,
Levuka, Ovalau, Fiji Islands."

Mr. Thurston having informed me that two vessels were expected to arrive from the Line Islands, which had left in defiance of him, having no licenses (as since the 'Young Australian' affair he had refused them altogether), I determined to examine the natives myself as soon as they arrived, more particularly as the owners had been especially warned by him about bringing labourers from the Kingsmills by either fraud or violence.

The consul appeared to me to have little or no authority in matters that touch the pockets of the planters. If they themselves want protection or advice, the ægis of British protection is somehow marvellously extended over the whole of the islands, but, on the other hand, when they neither want him nor his advice, then he is reminded that every Englishman's house is his castle, whether he be a baron or a beachcomber, and that he has not a shadow of authority outside the walls of the consulate, which stands on the beach, covering some thirty feet square of shingle, with a flagstaff in front, and the British ensign fluttering from it. Every pot-shop keeper, whose tumblers are smashed in a drunken row, will immediately complain to Mr. Thurston, call himself a British subject, and demand redress; and Her Majesty's consul leads a pretty active life of it.

The Wesleyan mission has been abundantly blessed in Fiji; but as usual the missionaries are abused, and their labours totally ignored, by those who but for them would never have dared to set foot on the island, and who are doing their very best to frustrate the work of years, by means of rum and muskets, and several other well-known evils unnecessary to mention.

See, here is a gentleman who will show the natives what civilisation means. He has passed from the amorous to the fighting stage of drunkenness, and staggers out of one of the many pot-houses that line the beach, where he, with several kindred spirits, has been endeavouring for the last hour to make Tui-Levuka, the old chief of Levuka, drunk; and to judge from the besotted and idiotic expression of the poor old man's face, they have been pretty successful. He sees a young native outside, whom he immediately salutes by hitting him right between the eyes, knocking him down, and cutting his face with a Brummagem ring he has on his hand. The native, who is a young Hercules, and could kill this wretched creature with a single blow if so minded, merely contents himself with shaking his drunken assailant as a terrier would a rat, making his cadaverous jaws rattle again, while some

bystanders come up and separate them, and the "mean white" sneaks back to the pot-shop partially sobered, and vowing vengeance against all "niggers."

I witnessed this little scene with Mr. Thurston, while smoking in the verandah of the consulate, as we talked over native affairs, and he was relating all his difficulties in keeping the rowdies in order. He remarked that it was a fair specimen of what took place on the beach almost every day, and that in all probability that same fellow will come and complain of a brutal assault having been made on him by natives, unless he drinks himself into a state of unconsciousness in the meantime, and forgets all about the matter, which is equally probable. I intimated to him that a good hairy boatswain's mate and a couple of quartermasters were entirely at his disposal so long as the 'Rosario' remained at Levuka.

Hearing that ——, the late supercargo of the '——' and '——' was in Levuka, I sent for him to hear his version of how the Kingsmill islanders that I had seen at Wai-dau came to Fiji.

He solemnly declared that they all knew of their engagements before they left their islands, but owing to there being no anchorage there, vessels drifted away very often. He said the women wanted to

accompany the men, and that was his reason for bringing them (the women) to Fiji.

Mr. Hennings, at Makongai, wanted the greatest number of labourers, and so they were taken there first, and the rest were sent where they were wanted.

On my informing him of the opposite statements I heard from the natives themselves, he objected to that made by Malawa, as that man, he said, had left his wife and come away from the islands with another girl; but his answers were very lame, and I told him that I had no doubt he had been guilty of piracy, although unable to prove it, which was very fortunate for him.

He protested his innocence, and asked me to come over to Makongai and question the natives there; and wishing to give him fair play I consented to bring the ship over on the Monday following—Sunday intervening. In the meantime, without informing me of his intention, he started in his cutter for Makongai, with the view, apparently, of directing the natives as to the answers they were to give; so I told the consul it would be wasting my time to take the ship there.

Mr. Thurston wished me to question Mr. ——, the late master of the barque '——.'

He stated that the vessel was owned by Mr. —— of Melbourne, and that the agents on board were —— and ——, the former of whom figured in the deputation that waited on me on the 20th.

They went to the Kingsmills for labourers, and Mr. —— openly gave out that he would not allow a single native to come on board improperly. They could not get any at either Hope, Byron, or Drummond Islands, owing to their being so shy, as their people had been stolen away. They then went on to the island of Perout, and through the influence of a white man named —— they got forty-two men, women, and children. They afterwards went back to Byron's Island, and got sixteen natives, relatives of those that had come on board at Perout.

He believed all these people came on board voluntarily for Fiji, as, although he did not know the language, they appeared to come quite willingly, and moreover brought their entire families with them.

On the return of the barque to the Rewa river, Mr. —— was discharged to the shore, the owner complaining that it was all his fault the vessel was not full of men; and he believes that if he had consented to kidnap he would be still in command of the vessel. This was the more hard, as he was com-

56983

pletely on his beam-ends in Fiji, and was in the position of a distressed British subject.

Nemesis however followed close in the wake of the owner, as the following extract from the *Fiji Times*, dated 9th October 1869, will show :—

"The 'Mary Anne Christina' arrived in Levuka harbour on Thursday from the Line Islands, and Captain Field brings the sad news of the massacre, by the natives, of the captain and first mate of the French barque 'Moorea,' and Mr. Latin, who was on board; also the wholesale loss of life of the savage murderers by drowning, in trying to make the land by swimming ashore.

"The following are the particulars as given us by Captain Field :—

"On the arrival of the 'Mary Anne Christina' at the island of Porou, on the 27th August, two white men, named Antoni and Slater, informed Captain Field that a week or two previous to his arrival a sad calamity had occurred, in the murder of three white men and the drowning of 250 natives. It seems that these two men had witnessed from the beach, the barque, some few miles from the shore, at the mercy of the winds and waves, and what seemed to them a confusion on board the vessel. The next day the barque was out of sight, but later in the day some thirty natives reached the shore, greatly exhausted, having been in the water since the day previous. From these natives it was gathered that they had risen in a body, surprised the captain and Mr. Latin, knocked them down, cut their heads nearly off, and thrown them into the sea. The first mate and a native named Sandy pulled out their revolvers, and shot the natives down in all directions, the mate accidentally shooting his subordinate Sandy, who immediately made below; the mate met the same fate as the captain shortly afterwards. The second mate, the natives say, ran below and hid himself. The murderers,

finding the vessel leaving the land fast, all jumped into the sea, and made for the shore, only thirty reaching the land out of some 280. From other sources Captain Field learnt that Mr. Latin had transhipped from the barque 'Anna' eighty natives, and had entered into some kind of partnership with the captain of the barque. The crew of the barque were natives of Tahiti, and seemed to have taken no part in the bloody work, so that the vessel may turn up again if the second mate understands navigation. Captain Field is of opinion that the chief of the above may be relied upon, he having had one of the natives on board his vessel, and cross-examined him for some time through his interpreter.

"Many persons in Levuka believed Mr. Latin had gone to Sydney in his vessel the 'Anna,' and will learn with regret his sad fate."

So much for kidnapping. It may be safely concluded that if the second mate ever does turn up, he will be cured of that complaint.

CHAPTER X.

DURING my absence at Wai-dau and Bureta a vessel arrived at Levuka, called the 'Daphne.' Expecting the 'Maria Christina' and the 'Anna' to arrive from the Line Islands, I had left orders that should they come in, or heave-to outside the harbour, during my absence, no natives were to be permitted to land.

The 'Daphne' arrived about two hours before the consul and myself, and as we pulled round and opened the harbour, Mr. Thurston said he thought the new arrival was one of the vessels expected, but on coming nearer we found she was only a small schooner, but having an awning sloped over her main hatch (the weather being bad) we concluded she had natives on board.

The first-lieutenant informed me that she was from Tanna, and had 100 natives on board, and that the officer of the guard had told the master no native was to leave the vessel until I arrived.

The next morning, very early, the natives were

most of them seen overboard, while a regular good cleaning was going on, the schooner lying out not very far from the 'Rosario.'

Wishing to see the consul before going on board the 'Daphne,' I went on shore, and shortly after her master, Daggett, and supercargo, Pritchard, appeared to report themselves. The former produced his papers, and said he had 100 passengers. The consul, after examining them, pointed out to me that the schooner's clearance was from Brisbane to Tanna and back, and that no mention whatever was made of Fiji.

I then asked Daggett for the passenger-list; he replied he had nothing to do with them, and that the supercargo had the management of all that; upon which Pritchard handed me several papers, amongst which were three licenses from the Queensland Government to procure fifty natives for settlers in that colony. I then inquired how it was he did not take the fifty to Brisbane, and why double the number had been brought over to the Fijis? He said that on their arrival at Tanna with the 100 natives from the Banks's group, they had all re-engaged themselves to come to Fiji. I then demanded these re-engagements, and he handed me the papers, when I found they were dated at no particular place,

and that the spaces left for that purpose had not been filled up.

During this conversation Mr. Thurston asked the master for his log-book. He went on board and fetched it. On examination, I found that the dates of the so-called re-engagements did not agree with those of the log; for instance, on the 14th March, the date of the engagements of the first fifty natives for Queensland, the 'Daphne' was at sea, steering S.E. On the 9th March she was at Star Island, where six natives appeared to have been engaged, whereas the log said,—"Obtained about twenty-eight natives this day," and that she was off Gana Island.

Again, on the 14th March, when the re-engagements for the largest number of natives were supposed to be dated at Gana, the ship was at sea, under a double-reefed topsail, with the latitude and longitude given.

Neither Daggett nor Pritchard could account for these discrepancies.

On further examination of the papers I found that the Queensland license (Form C.) was made out in favour of the well-known Ross Lewin. Both Mr. Thurston and myself at first believed this document to be a forgery, as it was inconceivable the

then Colonial Secretary of that colony, Mr. T. B. Stephens, should not know the character of the man to whom he had given it; but it turned out to be a *bona fide* document nevertheless. It authorized Ross Lewin to get fifty natives for Thomas White, Thomas Wilson, and Robert A. Rankin of Queensland, and was signed by T. B. Stephens, Colonial Secretary.

To the question how he came in possession of it, Pritchard replied they had met Lewin at Tanna, who told them they could get more for the natives at the Fijis than at Brisbane, and that, as the vessel was in debt, they (the owners) thought there would be no harm in bringing them over, as it was all explained to them, and they were willing to come, and that he was only Lewin's agent, who, with Murra the interpreter, had been left behind at Tanna.

I then informed him that neither the license nor the engagements were, in my opinion, worth the paper they were written on; that I strongly suspected the whole of the papers had been cooked up, as everything about them was irregular from beginning to end, and that I considered it a most extraordinary thing that an English ship should be found in the position of the 'Daphne,' namely, with

irregular papers,—no clearance for the port she comes to, and which is nearly 600 miles dead to windward of the one she ought to be at, and with double the number of natives on board she was allowed.

To this both these worthies replied they had no intention of doing anything wrong, and Daggett volunteered the remark that my mast-heads were a capital guide into the harbour, and that I might thereby be sure that everything was quite correct, etc.

The consul and myself then went on board the 'Daphne,' the master and supercargo preceding us.

We found her a small schooner of forty-eight tons register, fitted up precisely like an African slaver, *minus* the irons, with 100 natives on board, who had been brought here from the New Hebrides, having experienced the pleasure of a dead beat to windward for twenty-one days; they were stark naked, and had not even a mat to lie upon; the shelves were just the same as might be knocked up for a lot of pigs,—no bunks or partitions of any sort being fitted, and yet the vessel was inspected by a Government officer at Queensland![1]

[1] See trial of the 'Daphne' in the Vice-Admiralty Court of New South Wales.

There was no interpreter on board, and Pritchard allowed he could only make them understand a few words; however, Mr. Thurston had brought Jemmy with him in the hope of being able to question the natives, who were squatting about, looking emaciated and frightened.

Mr. Thurston put a question to a Loyalty Island native named "Dick," who formed one of a boat's crew Ross Lewin had put on board, and as he appeared likely to be communicative the cook called out something which stopped him, upon which the consul turned to me, and said it was evident we should get no more out of him.

We then pulled on shore and examined more minutely the ship's papers, log, and the so-called engagements, and found still greater discrepancies. This, combined with the fact that there was no interpreter, and Ross Lewin figuring as a principal actor in the entire transaction, determined me to seize the vessel and land her cargo of human beings at once, on the suspicion that the vessel, master, supercargo, and crew had been engaged, if not in active slaving, at the least in a most irregular traffic, tending to promote and encourage the slave trade, in violation of Acts 5 Geo. IV. c. 113, and 6 and 7 Vict. c. 98.

Accordingly the next morning I landed the natives in the 'Rosario's' boats, but not without some difficulty, as the poor creatures, seeing the officer on duty with a sword on, imagined they were going to be killed and eaten; the landing took some little time.

I had previously arranged with the consul that they were to be placed under his protection; consequently his people were all ready to receive them. They were landed some distance clear of the houses, for decency's sake, and some cloth given them to cover their nakedness, as I presumed the European females in Levuka were not quite so callous as their sisters on some at least of the Queensland plantations, as according to the evidence given by one of their husbands before the Select Committee, he thought the nakedness of the native labourers on his estate *was only a nine days' wonder with the women!* [1]

As soon as the *passengers* from the 'Daphne' were landed they were quickly at their ease, as a good pot of yams was set before them, and replenished as often as necessary. It was then discovered that one lad had lost the use of his left leg, and the whole lot looked as wretched as it is possible to conceive human beings.

[1] See evidence of the Hon. Louis Hope, M.L.C., before the Select Committee at Brisbane, July 24, 1869.

It appeared that immediately on the 'Daphne's' arrival at Levuka the price of "niggers" ("passage-money," it is called) went up from £4, 10s. to £5, 10s. and £6 a head, just like so many cattle; and had I allowed them to be landed by Pritchard, he would, with the other owners, have pocketed about £600—not a bad job, considering everything.

Both Daggett and Pritchard wished to throw all the blame on Lewin, and appeared much astonished at hearing that gentleman was not considered the most respectable of men, and of course took refuge in his being an agent licensed by the Queensland Government. His head-quarters appear to be at Tanna, where he supplies natives taken from the other islands to the different vessels that come for them.

The owners of the 'Daphne' were Messrs. Smith, Bates, Strickland, Sterne, and Pritchard, who had bought the vessel in Adelaide, and had brought up their families to the New Hebrides, intending to settle, and, according to their own account, had never set eyes on Lewin until he came to Tanna in the 'Spunkie.' In fact they, Messrs. Daggett and Pritchard, were a pair of injured innocents, and that they should be suspected of kidnapping appeared to cause them the most acute anguish.

Daggett, who hailed from Massachusetts, said he

had always told Lewin and others never to ill-treat the poor harmless creatures, but to do as they would be done by, etc. etc. etc.

Great was the indignation along the beach at Levuka when it became known that the 'Daphne' had been seized on suspicion of slaving, and a great many were furious that the "niggers" should be all under Mr. Thurston's immediate eye, until an opportunity should offer for sending them back to their islands. One man, who acted as pilot, was moved to tears (being very drunk at the moment) by the intelligence, as he had offered to take the whole lot; and as he did not possess any property, it was easy to see what he wanted. Being one of the first to board the vessel in his capacity as pilot, he was the first in the market, but Pritchard, who perceived that there was a great demand for labour, would not close with him, and in the meantime the price ran up to £6 per head.

The majority of the planters, whatever they may have thought of my proceedings, had the wisdom to remain silent, as here was evidence there was no gainsaying, and any sympathy on their part with Messrs. Pritchard, Lewin, and Co., would have been too absurd after their memorial to Lord Belmore.

Some however, I know, were heartily glad that a check had been put on the proceedings of these vessels, which were, *and still are,* infesting the islands, and bringing disgrace on the British flag, as the following letter from the *Otago Witness* will show :—

"It is due to the planters and white people in Fiji to state that the feeling of indignation with which they have heard of the brutalities practised in the islands is as deep and as strong as it can be anywhere. Imported labour is a necessity with them, if cultivation is to be extended; but there are numbers among them who would immediately abandon both their plantations and Fiji if they thought it requisite that brutality and kidnapping should be practised on their behalf. Of course the seizure of this vessel has produced a great stir, and is a source of great anxiety to us all in Fiji.

"It will probably for a time deter many from seeking, however honestly, to engage these men, and will thus prevent cultivation from extending so rapidly as we had hoped. But in the face of the strong feeling which acts of brutality must create, we confidently rely on a sense of justice preventing the total prohibition of immigration because it is abused. Let the abuses be put down with a stern and prompt hand by all means, but at the same time let a commission be appointed to inquire into the condition of the labourers here. It would receive every assistance from the planters, who would still more gladly welcome a resident inspector in the islands."

There is a healthy tone about this letter, of which the above is only an extract, displaying a marked contrast to the sentiments of a great number of

Queensland planters, who shelter themselves under their Polynesian Labour Act, which they manage to evade whenever it suits their convenience.

Daggett and Pritchard made a last attempt on me, by declaring they had meant no harm; that they would be ruined, and their families left in Tanna would starve; and that they wished Lewin had been hanged (to which I cordially assented) before they had seen him, etc. etc.

My stony heart, however, was not in the least melted by their entreaties, and I told them the law-officers of the Crown at Sydney would have to decide as to their guilt or innocence.

INSIDE THE REEF AT LEVUKA FIJI.

CHAPTER XI.

It was pleasant to get away from the beach of Levuka to its beautiful coral reefs, and to escape from the hot atmosphere of the consulate to the fresh sea-breeze and the foaming breakers.

Perhaps there is no more wonderful scene in nature than at low-water to watch the ocean swell dash upon the outer edge of these glorious reefs, as you stand firm and secure upon them, forming a succession of breaking waves which have never for a moment ceased since the barrier has risen to restrain them, and causing a perpetual mist to ascend all round the island.

Clothed in light flannel, with a straw hat, I delighted to wander over them, with boat-hook in hand and a pair of old boots on, looking more like a beach-comber than a naval officer.

How wonderful is the vast stony structure that the little polypes have built, which defy the waters of the ocean,—to think that this is the work of myriads of tiny creatures which labour and die in

the orifices that they themselves form by an unceasing calcareous deposit; little star-like insects which cannot be seen by the naked eye, but whose gelatinous secretions are quite tangible immediately you take hold of the madrepores which are completely covered by them!

It is strange that the branching coral is usually found on the exposed edge of the reefs interlaced with the more solid kind, which is built sheer up from the sea like a wall.

Gorgeous colours of every shade and hue meet the eye on all sides; in fact, no flower-show can exceed the beauties of the coral reef. Wading along is by no means easy work, as you slip very often over the corallines, and have to take care of the ocean holes, which are numerous, and in which different varieties of fish abound. I got several specimens during my rambles.

The Fiji women and girls come out at dead low-water, when many parts of the reef are all but dry, to collect shell fish. The operculum of one kind is extremely beautiful, consisting of a dark green shaded off into white and a delicate brown, having the appearance of an eye. Many are of a large size, and Mrs. Thurston was kind enough to give me more than a hundred, two of which, the largest ever

seen in Sydney, are now in the possession of my nine-tenths.[1]

The coral insects do not live or work at a greater depth than twenty-five or at most thirty fathoms; now the depth of water is from sixty to ninety fathoms up and down outside the reef, consequently the rock on which they have built has been slowly subsiding, during which time they have continued building up to the surface, and thus forming a barrier sometimes two hundred fathoms steep on its ocean side, which, as the land slowly sinks that forms the base, is still growing upward to the surface. The inside part of the reef slopes off gradually towards the land, forming a passage sometimes deep enough for the largest ship that ever floated, often only sufficient to allow boats to pass; but if the island continued to subside, the coral reef would grow in the same proportion, and would consequently form a gradually deeper channel.

Some islands have been rising, however; and at Tanna and Vaté I noticed coral cliffs some forty feet high in the latter island; and as coral never lives above the surface of the water, it follows that these beds have been slowly upheaved. Whether this up-

[1] The shore-going term "better half" expresses but poorly the sailor's wife.

heaval is still going on among the New Hebrides I cannot say; but it is remarkable that no barrier reefs encircle them—only here and there a small fringing reef, while at the Fijis, like the Samoan and Tongan groups, barrier reefs surround them, showing that for ages these islands have been gradually sinking beneath the waters of the Pacific.

I noticed that all the openings in the reefs were opposite to some ravine or gully in the mountains. This is caused by the fresh-water rivulet that opened a passage through them when they were only fringing reefs, and attached to what was then the base of the mountain, and thus these passages are simply continuations of the valleys.

On these reefs are collected every sort and description of sea-shell and echini; broken bits of coral, drift timber, sea-weed, and sand may be seen wedged in between the masses of coral; and it is easy to conceive how quickly a barrier reef that has encircled a mountain, which has slowly sunk, may itself become an island, shaped like a ring, in the middle of the ocean, having a sandy beach, with bushes and cocoa-nuts growing, from the seeds and plants washed on it. Entire trunks of trees may frequently be seen cast on them, bearing insects and small lizards from neighbouring islands and conti-

nents. Turtle and sea-birds soon collect round these atolls, as these circular reefs are called, and thus one of the most lovely objects in nature is presented to the eye of the voyager in the tropical seas.

I had a good view of one of these beautiful atolls coming home from New Zealand, by way of Honolulu and San Francisco. On the 20th August 1870, we passed close to Fanning's Island before reaching the Sandwich Islands. In shape it is like the letter C, covered with bushes and cocoa-nut trees, the tops of which are from forty to sixty feet above the sea level. It is surrounded by a beach of dazzling whiteness. A small entrance leads to the interior lagoon of emerald green water, in which fish appeared numerous, and which accounted for the many gulls and tern that hovered so plentifully around us.

This coral ring is many miles in circumference, and a couple of huts were seen on the eastern entrance of the lagoon, probably used by Europeans who visit these islands for the purpose of scraping cocoa-nut oil.

The water was of an ocean-blue within a few yards of the beach, showing that the reef rose sheer up from the bottom.

Another of these atolls we passed without a vestige of verdure on it—not a shrub or tree was to be

seen, nothing but a ring of white coral sand. Many a ship has come to grief on them during a dark night.

Bêche-de-mer, or trepang, which is found on the sandy bottoms inside the coral reefs of the different groups, forms a profitable trade for those engaged in it.

This disgusting-looking sea slug is a great luxury in China, being esteemed there as caviare is with us. It abounds in these islands; but of late English traders find "*black-birding*" far more lucrative than bêche-de-mering. Its value in Canton varies, according to quality, from six dollars up to fifty per pecul, and is one of the principal articles imported to the Celestial Empire. I saw plenty of these slugs inside the reefs, but after a heavy gale they frequently get covered with sand.

The Fijians call them "Dri," and collect them in large quantities on the northern coasts of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu.

But I must not linger any longer on the reefs, as Mr. Darwin has described all their wonders so charmingly and so truthfully, that to enlarge upon such a subject would be only painting the lily; and although I cannot agree on all points with the learned author of the *Origin of Species*, I most heartily admire

and appreciate his *Naturalist's Voyage*, and cannot refrain from quoting one passage :—

"Nor can I quite pass over the probability of the former existence of large archipelagos of lofty islands, where now only rings of coral rock scarcely break the open expanse of sea, throwing some light on the distribution of the inhabitants of the other high islands, now left standing so immensely remote from each other in the midst of the great ocean. The reef-constructing corals have indeed reared and preserved wonderful memorials of the subterranean oscillations of level; we see in each barrier-reef a proof that the land has there subsided, and in each atoll a monument over an island now lost. We may thus, like unto a geologist who had lived his ten thousand years, and kept a record of the passing changes, gain some insight into the great system by which the surface of this globe has been broken up, and land and water interchanged."[1]

Pulling across the harbour, which is merely formed by the barrier reef we have just left, we pause a moment to look at the 'Rosario's' anchor; there it lies, biting the sand right under us, with the cable like a huge snake creeping into the hawse-holes; the water is beautifully clear, and the length of chain touching the coral sand is as bright as silver. Several large sharks are cruising about with numerous other fish of quieter dispositions.

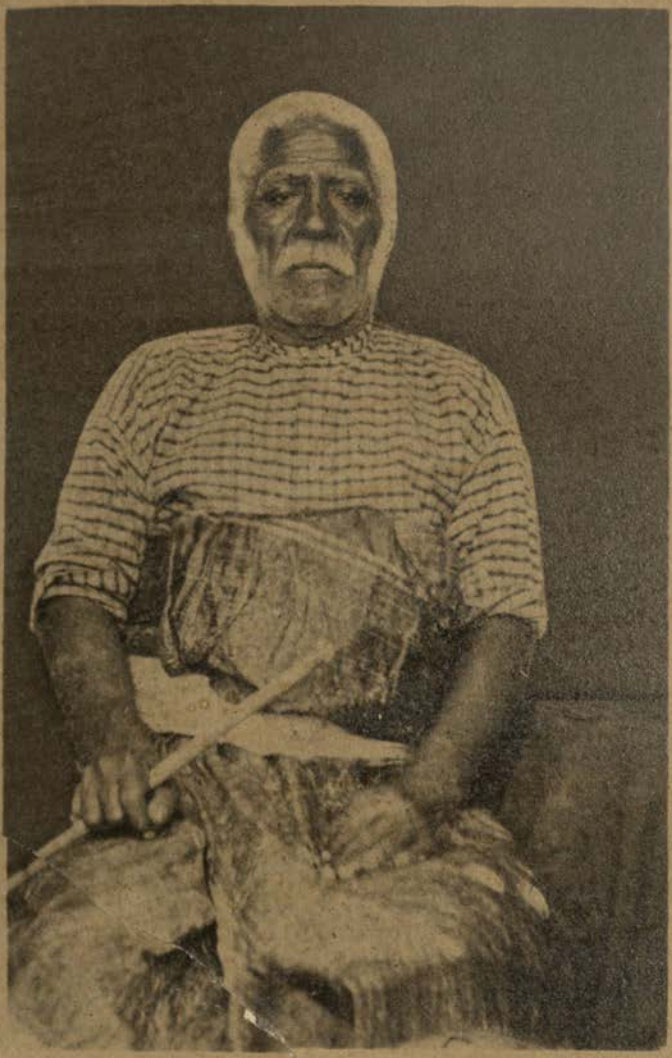
A sad event occurred the other day: a large canoe was capsized while coming from the reef to

[1] Darwin's *Naturalist's Voyage*, ch. xx. p. 481.

the shore, and only two natives out of nine reached it. This however is unusual, and hunger must have made these cowardly animals bold.

Landing under the shade of a dense grove of cocoa-nuts at the mouth of a small stream that rushes down the valley, we pass up into the darker shade of the forest, along a path that follows the stream, until the murmur of a cascade is heard, and on a sudden turn it becomes visible, dashing over the volcanic rocks, and forming a deliciously cool, deep pool for bathing. In this pool my first-lieutenant very nearly came to grief. In taking a dive he unfortunately struck his head against a sunken rock, but being blessed, as he said, with a good thick skull, he came off with only the loss of a considerable quantity of blood, and an ugly wound, which, however, healed in a day or two.

On our way back towards the settlement we came across several native huts with their neatly thatched roofs; the natives enjoying themselves outside, all having a pleasant nod for the strangers, the women and children gathering round the yams that were cooking for supper. Each little village appears to have its yam and taro patches, and these people with their Tongan teachers seem to lead a quiet and happy life now they are cured of war.



Mr. Moore and Mr. Nettleton are the Wesleyan missionaries who at present reside at Levuka, from whom I received great hospitality and much valuable information. The history of the Wesleyan mission in these islands is a thing to read and ponder over, and must ever be a standing protest against the ignorant and foolish talking so often indulged in by those who undervalue missionary effort.

Ratu Abel, one of Thakombau's sons, paid me a visit yesterday in a large double canoe. He came from the little island of Bau, which lies close to Viti Levu, and, although the smallest of the group, is not the least important; his father's influence has extended by degrees until the present time, and he is considered the principal chief of the civilized portion of the Fijis.

Thakombau was once a noted cannibal, but has long since given that up, and by a close alliance with the better class of whites conducts his household as far as possible after the European model.

One of his sons has entered into partnership with an Englishman in a cotton plantation, the former finding Fiji labourers, and the latter the machinery.

The old chief's remark upon hearing that his Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh was about to visit Fiji, will sufficiently show his ideas regarding his

former life. He expressed his intention to cover the entire island with native mats, "so that the Queen of England's son should not dirty his foot with the blood-stained soil of Bau."

Ratu Abel is a fine handsome young fellow. Beyond the usual tapa round the loins, he wore nothing but a handsome blue silk handkerchief round his neck. His hair was frizzled out in the height of Fiji fashion, and he took his glass of sherry with me like a gentleman. His attendants squatted with humble demeanour outside the cabin door, watching us, however, with a comical look as we performed a polite pantomime.

I showed him all that was to be seen, and he particularly admired the 6½-ton gun. His double canoe was very comfortably fitted up, with every facility for cooking, and a neat little raised cabin abaft.

What a pity this fine race cannot be taken under our wing—say the joint protectorate of England and America. The islands are astonishingly fertile, so that cotton bursts from the pod three months after it is planted The harbours are excellent, especially that of Suva—and, occupying a central position in the South Pacific, it must one day be the call of the San Francisco line of steamers to Sydney.

A white population is fast increasing, and, as

usual, are causing the aborigines to recede. The latter are fast dying out. The spear and club cannot stand before the rifle and revolver, and the "civilizing" effects that follow in the train of the white man result in the misery and death of the native. The plan I have proposed would strengthen very materially the hands of the missionaries, not only of this but of all the surrounding groups, and arrest, if it could not prevent, the early extinction of this fine race.

I put the Hon. Richard Bingham, the senior sub-lieutenant, on board the 'Daphne,' with a prize crew, victualled her for a month, and gave Mr. Clarke, late master of the 'Anna,' a passage to Sydney in her.

Mr. Thurston had been endeavouring to find a native to act as an interpreter, but in vain; and it was impossible for me to take any of the poor creatures just landed, for two reasons,—first, because they were physically unfit at that time to undertake another sea voyage; and secondly, because their oath would not be received in a court of law. It would therefore have been useless for me to have taken any of them to Sydney.

On the 26th April I took the 'Daphne' in tow, and at 3 P.M. the 'Rosario' was steaming outside the reef with her. The next day a light easterly

breeze springing up, I cast her off well clear of the islands, and made sail, both of us making the best of our way to Sydney.

We experienced no S.E. trade, the wind, what little there was of it, hanging persistently to the southward, and this compelled me to get up steam on the evening of the 2d of May, in order to clear the Conway reef, for we should have lost too much ground by going to the northward of it.

We got a few hours' trade on the 5th, when it again fell calm, but I could not afford to steam, having very little coal left.

On the 10th May we had a heavy gale from the north-east, veering rapidly round to the north and north-west, south-west and south, in twelve hours. I never saw it blow harder in the squalls; and after furling the fore-topsail and courses, and taking in three reefs in the main-topsail, with reefed trysails and fore-staysail, I let her go. As usual, the little craft behaved beautifully—as tight as a bottle, and as buoyant as a cork. The next day it was nearly calm again.

We were right in the trade region, but, except for twelve hours, had nothing but southerly, westerly, and north-west winds, with calms.

At daylight on the 18th we sighted Lord Howe's Island and Ball's Pyramid. Ships have to keep a

little to the northward of their port in making the coast, owing to the Australian current, which is strongly felt running to the southward, about one hundred and fifty miles from the coast. When we first made the Sydney light coming out from England in 1868, it swept us to the southward forty miles in twelve hours, and owing to thick weather having come on, we found ourselves off Woollongong instead of Sydney, in spite of a strong south-east wind that was blowing right against it.

At last, on the 19th, we thought we had a steady breeze from the north-east, but it only ran us in to a hundred miles of the coast, and then dropped. So the kettle was once more set to boil, and we steamed down the coast, arriving at Sydney at 10 A.M. on the 21st of May, being twenty-five days from Levuka, and only a little over two and a half months since leaving Sydney.

CHAPTER XII.

THE 'Daphne' had a much longer passage than the 'Rosario,' which was to be expected; but I hardly bargained she would have taken thirty-nine days. She did not make her appearance until the 4th of June, having been for twelve days within 200 miles of the coast, but could do nothing against the prevailing strong westerly winds.

I began at last to be rather anxious about her, knowing she had only thirty days' provisions on board, which however could be eked out to last six weeks nearly, if necessary, and I knew that if the worst came, Mr. Bingham would bear up for the French settlement of Noumea, in New Caledonia, as I had every confidence in his judgment and seamanship. But I was very glad when, one evening, a schooner showing English colours but no distinguishing number was signalled off the heads. I had made arrangements ten days before for a tug to be sent out to her, and about nine o'clock the same night I had the satisfaction to see her anchored close

to us in Farm Cove. It was very evident the ship's company shared my feelings, as they could not refrain from giving three cheers, which under the circumstances I allowed to pass unnoticed, but in general no demonstration is indulged in by a man-of-war without permission.

Fortunately she fell in with the 'Magellan Cloud,' a schooner that left Levuka nearly about the same time, the master of whom very civilly supplied them with provisions, which had nearly run out, and Mr. Bingham was reduced to something like a biscuit and a dip for dinner.

On my arrival I had reported the capture of the 'Daphne' on suspicion of slaving, and was informed that immediately on her arrival the master and supercargo would be arrested and brought before the Water Police Court. Consequently I gave orders that no communication was to be allowed between the vessel and the shore until the authorities had taken the requisite steps in the matter.

On the 6th June the Crown Solicitor, Mr. John Williams, told me that by keeping the people on board the schooner I might lay myself open to an action for false imprisonment; so I allowed them to go and come as they pleased. The authorities as yet had made no sign, notwithstanding the minutes

of the Attorney-General (Sir William Manning), dated May 24th, before the 'Daphne's' arrival, in which he says :—"There can be no doubt of the duty of the Crown law-officers of this colony *to act upon the instructions they have received* for prosecuting this vessel to condemnation," etc. etc.

Again :—"The Crown Solicitor will at once be instructed to commence proceedings in the Vice-Admiralty Court of this port, so soon as the 'Daphne' shall have arrived."

In a couple of days after, the Crown Solicitor said he would come on board and examine the crew of the 'Daphne,' which he did, sending for them one by one into my cabin.

At the close of this examination I asked what he thought of it, to which he replied, "I am afraid we shall not be able to make out a case." I said, "It looks very like it at present."

I did not attach much importance to this examination, as the men were not on their oath, and I knew that a clever barrister would very soon turn them inside out, more particularly as one man said that he made a stipulation with the shipping master at Brisbane that he was not to go away in any boat! This was an able seaman.

Time wore on, and I heard on all sides that the

whole matter would be burked if I did not take care, as so many merchants in Sydney were closely connected with, and had interest in, Queensland plantations, together with several in the New South Wales Government, that every possible delay and difficulty would be thrown in my way.

One individual accosted me in the drawing-room of Government House, before dinner one evening, and had the impertinence to ask me why I had taken the vessel if I did not expect to get any prize-money out of her! This was said in Lord Belmore's hearing. Another facetiously introduced himself to me as the "Head centre of the Polynesian slave trade." But he did not insult me; and we both agreed admirably in our estimate of Ross Lewin, strange as it may seem.

On the other hand, I had all the sympathy of right-thinking honourable men, who were ashamed to see the lukewarmness of the Government in a matter in which their colony was almost as much concerned as Queensland.

At last, *fourteen days* after the arrival of the 'Daphne,' the master and supercargo were arrested and taken before the Water Police Magistrates, having during this time been advised what to swear to and what not, and thoroughly well instructed as

to what they were to say. I saw Mr. Windeyer, the counsel employed by the Crown Solicitor, just five minutes before entering the Court, and to judge by his questions he evidently knew as much about the matter as the man in the moon, which was not surprising, considering he had only been engaged late the previous evening; he however at once entered heart and soul into the matter.

The charge against Daggett and Pritchard was as follows :—

"That they had on the high seas, knowingly, wilfully, feloniously, and piratically received, conveyed, and removed (and assisted in the same) certain persons, whose names are unknown, for the purpose of their being imported into an island in the South Seas, called Ovalau, with a view to their being used and dealt with as slaves."

As the mass of evidence was all against me, Mr. Dalley, the prisoners' clever counsel, had it all his own way, and very adroitly showed how the natives clung with fondness to the vessel upon my sending the 'Rosario's' boats to land them, and made *me* the kidnapper instead of Daggett. This was turning the tables with a vengeance! But let us glance at the evidence.

All the crew of the 'Daphne' confessed that loaded

muskets were always taken on shore in the boat that went for natives; that Ross Lewin always went with his own boat's crew, consisting of the Maré men he brought from the 'Spunkie.' This latter proceeding of course was in order to prevent any suspicion of foul play.

It was proved that the documents I handed into Court, namely, the so-called engagements and re-engagements between Lewin and the natives, all bore false dates; one of the latter for Fiji being dated *prior* to the original engagements for Brisbane, and that these dates did not agree with the position of the ship as stated in her log, showing that either these so-called engagements were false, or that the different entries in the log were so.

Again, the Imperial Passenger Act, 18 & 19 Vict. cap. 119, had evidently been infringed, as the 'Daphne,' registering 48 tons, is found carrying 100 natives in addition to her crew; and on her way to Tanna from Banks's group, it is proved she had on board at one time 122 souls, and nobody can say how many more besides.

It was also proved that clauses 8, 16, and 20 of the Queensland Labour Act had been broken, which stipulate that proper clothing is to be furnished to

the natives, who were also to be fed daily on a dietary scale, namely:—

	lbs.	oz.
Yams, . . .	4	0
or Rice, . . .	1½	0
or Maize Meal, . .	1½	0
Meat (pork or beef), .	1	0
Tea, . . .	0	0½
Sugar, . . .	0	2
Tobacco (during good behaviour) per week, . .	0	1½

That the undermentioned clothing shall be supplied to each labourer "*immediately on embarkation*," in advance:—

1 flannel shirt,
1 pair trousers,
1 blanket;

also that none but able-bodied men or lads shall be taken; whereas *none* of them were clothed, not even having blankets to lie on during the time the 'Daphne' was beating to windward for three weeks. Neither had they been fed as directed. Fungi, one of the Maré men (which Mr. Dalley facetiously explained was the plural for Fungus), said that he had the special charge of feeding the natives, and that "they had no meat" but corn-meal, yams, and cocoa-nuts; as for tea, sugar, and tobacco, that

notion was so absurd that the counsel evidently thought it not worth while to ask such a question, as, muttering something about champagne and turtle soup, he sat down.

One young lad, as we have before seen, had lost the use of his left leg, and I was at first informed by Daggett that Lewin brought him on board in that state, but the next day Pritchard and Daggett said he had got into that condition on board.

The evidence of James Mead, sail-maker of the 'Rosario,' showed that Daggett made a virtue of necessity by steering boldly into Levuka, after they made us out to be a man-of-war. He went on board the 'Daphne' to visit his "cousin," James Aviss, one of her crew, and on asking him why they had been such fools as to come in right under the nose of a man-of-war, Aviss replied that they would have kept away if they had thought our boats would not have been sent after them. He (Aviss) also said that it would have been all right if the old man (meaning Daggett) had done what Frank (the mate) had said. This conversation was not told to me, strange to say, at the time, but I since ascertained that it was well known to all on board, and at Levuka, hence the *apparent* openness of all the subsequent proceedings, and the remark that Daggett volunteered to me

at the consul's office, namely, that my mast-heads formed a capital guide into the port.

All this was flatly denied by Aviss when in the witness-box, who also prevaricated in the most bare-faced manner; when called upon to remember what he had stated in my cabin as to having stipulated with the shipping master at Brisbane, that he was not to go away in any boat at the islands, he did not remember ever having said such a thing. No violence of any sort was offered to the natives until the man-of-war's boats came for them—that was the only violence he ever saw!

Again, the evidence of William Pattison, cook and steward of the 'Daphne,' was false, as he swore he *never spoke* to the Loyalty Islander "Dick" when he was being questioned by Mr. Thurston on board the 'Daphne' at Levuka, in my presence, and which caused Mr. Thurston to turn to me and say, "It is evident we shall get no more out of him."

Having caused a careful measurement of the 'Daphne' to be made, the following are her exact proportions:—

Dimensions of the Schooner 'Daphne.'

	ft.	in.
Extreme length, . . .	73	0
Length for tonnage, . . .	62	0
Extreme breadth, . . .	18	0
Depth of hold, . . .	10	0

Lower Shelf or Platform.

	ft.	in.
Breadth, aft, ...	2	6
,, midships, . . .	5	6½
,, forward, . . .	3	5½
Height from floor, . . .	0	6
,, . between platforms, . .	2	9

Upper Shelf or Platform.

Breadth, aft, ...	4	8
,, midships, . . .	5	9
,, forward, . . .	4	11
Height between upper platform and upper deck beams, ...	2	2½

Passage in Hold between Platforms.

Length from tank to foremast, .	16	0
Width forward, . . .	4	1
,, aft, ...	5	0

Five stanchions, four inches square, supported the upper deck, and the two shelves or platforms were secured to them.

With regard to the accommodation for the "native passengers" afforded by the 'Daphne,' although the dimensions of her passenger-deck (if the shelves or platforms can be so termed) were in accordance with clause 16 of the Queensland Labour Act, it was not so in other respects, although the vessel was inspected by a Government officer at Brisbane, prior to her sailing for the New Hebrides.

These shelves run round the vessel's hold, and are *not* fitted as berths or sleeping-places, there being no partitions whatever, although the Imperial Passenger Act, art. 21, directs that they should be six feet in length, and eighteen inches in breadth. The same Act also directs that only one adult shall be carried for every fifteen clear superficial feet (in the tropics), whereas by packing the natives as close as they could possibly lie, only seventy-six could be stowed on the two shelves out of the 100 she had on board. Had I seen the vessel under other circumstances, my impression would have been that she was fitted for carrying sheep or pigs.

Again, no interpreter having been brought with the natives to Fiji from the New Hebrides, it was a moral impossibility that they could hire themselves out to the planters on those islands as free labourers, consequently they could only be "dealt with as slaves"—so I imagined—by the supercargo of the 'Daphne.' The interpreter named Murra, a native, was taken very conveniently sick, and left behind with Lewin at Tanna, which would enable him to procure more natives for the next vessel that arrived in want of them for Queensland.

Finally, it was proved by a document found on Pritchard when taken into custody, that he was a

partner of Ross Lewin's; he had also another paper, authorizing him to act in the *disposal* of certain labourers under agreement to, and *consigned to him, Ross Lewin.* It was evident that this *human cargo* would have been handed over to the highest bidder at Levuka, if I had not been opportunely on the spot to stop the transaction, as Pritchard afterwards in his evidence before the Vice-Admiralty Court said, "They" (the natives) "had no option to whom they should give their services;" and again, "They were bound by their agreements to serve, and if they refused, *I would not have taken them back to their islands.*"[1]

The trial lasted two days, and was a source of infinite amusement to those who came to hear it. Nothing I seemed to say, or wanted to say, was evidence, and the trial in *Pickwick* was always present to my mind; the ingenious brow-beating, the flashes of wit, were all new to me; and it being my first appearance in a witness-box, I must have cut a sorry figure in comparison with old Daggett, who, with long white hair and spectacles, seemed more like a missionary than master of the 'Daphne,' and his appearance evidently created a marked sensation, although I thought I could detect a curious

[1] See trial of the 'Daphne' in the Vice-Admiralty Court of N. S. Wales.

gleam in the eye of Mr. Dalley, when he glanced from time to time at his interesting client

It was a charming sight to see this dapper little barrister, with his well-cut coat and white waistcoat, stand up to deliver his harangue, with his hat, lavender kid gloves, and cane before him.

I deeply regret not being able to recollect half the ingenious nonsense that this very clever and amusing advocate talked, but I well remember his concluding sentence when addressing the Bench, the occupants of which looked preternaturally solemn and cowed before his thundering eloquence. It was to this effect :—

"It is monstrous, your Worships, that English vessels, while pursuing their lawful trade, cannot sail upon these seas in peace ; the idea that they may at any moment be liable to capture by this Wilberforce of the Pacific is, I say, absurd and outrageous, and is not to be tolerated for one moment ; moreover, it is clearly proved that these native passengers were not slaves, nor intended to be dealt with as slaves, and therefore your worships have no case to send before a jury."

Mr. Windeyer replied that the natives were treated as slaves as soon as the captain said he could get £4, 10s. a piece for them ; it was a

solemn farce going through the form of signing agreements when they were taken to the Fijis not for their own advantage but for that of the shippers. It might be a new form of obtaining slaves, but it was not the less slavery, when the captain could hand them over to others for profit; such a case ought to be sent to a jury as the most satisfactory way of dealing with it.

This address, which of course appeared to me very sensible, was not, however, deemed so convincing as the former, and the consequence was, the case was dismissed. I consoled myself, however, that any day Mr. Thurston might find an interpreter, and send down proof that might satisfy even the Water Police Magistrates of Sydney; and moreover the vessel herself had to be tried in the Vice-Admiralty Court, so I lived in hope that justice would yet be done.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE following day I wrote a letter to Lord Belmore, protesting against the delay that had taken place before the trial, which, in my opinion, had contributed in a great measure to the result. Moreover, I had, privately, the opinion of the most influential and respected firm of attorneys in Sydney, that I had established a very good case for a jury, and that owing to its peculiar nature the Magistrates ought to have committed the master and supercargo of the 'Daphne' for trial.

This letter, however, I afterwards withdrew, at Lord Belmore's request, although after events made me regret having done so. I had good reason for believing that it had the effect of wakening the authorities up a little, and of showing them that the affair was not a private one of mine, and that therefore nothing would stop me from having it sifted thoroughly, as until now the most extraordinary dilatoriness had been displayed in the whole

transaction from the beginning, and, combined with the reports I heard on all sides, I was more than ever convinced there was no real wish on the part of the authorities to stop the eccentric proceedings that Sydney vessels had been for years engaged in among the islands. The action I had taken had seriously disturbed the arrangements of a great many influential men in Sydney, who were owners, or part owners of plantations in Queensland, and whose pockets would suffer considerably if the traffic in natives were stopped.

In the meantime preparations for the trial of the schooner were being made, and I received a letter from Mr. Thurston, telling me that up to the date of his writing (2d June) he had been trying to get an interpreter, but as yet without success—still, he was very sanguine that before long he should find one. The 'Daphne' "passengers" were well contented, as some of the Wai-dau (Banks's group) labourers came over and discovered their relations among them, but unfortunately neither could as yet speak Fijian. He says:—"The whole lot of men look dreadfully thin, and seem exactly like men recovering from an overdose of opium—half-stupid, bothered, dazed. I don't believe Mr. Ross Lewin gave them the slightest hint of their voyage, but will soon find out all about it

and let you know. The 'Barb' left to-day with forty-two men, who were all paid off before me, and were well satisfied. I gave the master a pass authorizing his conveyance of passengers *to* the New Hebrides, but nothing further. Great rascality is going on at the Kingsmill Islands, and *must be stopped.*"

My object now was to delay further proceedings in the matter, until I should be in possession of overwhelming evidence that should convince the most sceptical. But here I was checkmated by a letter dated August 14th, from the Crown Solicitor, in which he says, "The Attorney-General has handed to me your letter to his Excellency the Earl of Belmore, which his Lordship had referred to him. By that letter he finds that you have received a letter from Mr. Consul Thurston, from which it appears hopeless to expect any evidence from any of the men released by you at Ovalau, within such time as the judge could be asked to name. Such evidence must necessarily be regarded as out of the question; and I am instructed to observe that even if Mr. Thurston should find an interpreter, there is no reason to suppose that any of the men themselves would prove competent to take an oath in a Court of Justice or before a Commission."

On the 26th August I received another letter from the Crown Solicitor, asking whether I wished to have a Commission sent to the Fijis to collect the evidence I suspected was to be gathered there. But several buckets of cold water were dashed over the proposal in the very next paragraph, thus:—

"The Attorney-General, to whom I have mentioned this matter, wishes me to state that, as far as he is at present informed, there appears to be no reason to expect that if a Commission is sent, evidence of any value will be obtainable, and I must also remind you that in order to obtain a Commission it will be necessary to show upon affidavit, to the satisfaction of a judge, that there are persons (and they must be named) who will be able to give material evidence on your behalf. The cost of sending a Commission to Fiji and taking evidence there will be very great, and as the Attorney-General has been informed that the Home Government will not pay the cost of such proceedings, but that you will be personally liable for the same, he thinks he must leave it with you to determine whether it shall be applied for."

Of course under these circumstances I did not ask for a Commission, more particularly as the owners of the 'Daphne,' after the discharge of the master and supercargo, were counting on getting heavy damages out of me for the detention of the vessel.

Some remarks by his Honour the Chief Justice, Sir Alfred Stephen, were about this time forwarded to me, and as they may be of service to other officers in the like position as myself,—unless in the mean-

time the Statute regarding slavery is altered—I shall make some extracts from them :—

"Inasmuch as I am required to form some opinion as to the case made, I deem it my duty to say, that unless upon due and careful consideration the advisers of the captor can see any likelihood of evidence being procurable to establish that the natives taken on board the 'Daphne' were actually, within the true and correct meaning of the term, slaves, or were about to be placed in the condition of slaves, the captor should at once determine whether or not there is any advantage in proceeding further in the matter.

"It will not be enough to show that *artifice* has been used, or *even falsehood told*, to induce the natives to enter into the agreements or contracts mentioned, if they really did enter into the contracts.

"The *morality* of the proceeding cannot be taken into consideration in determining the question raised here. The captor will have substantially to prove that the natives were going to be passed into a state of real slavery by those who had taken them on board the 'Daphne,' or were to be put in a state really amounting to slavery, and in violation of the agreement, and against their will."

This must be good news for some of the skippers of the Sydney traders, together with Ross Lewin and his employers. As all the so-called engagements or agreements were made on board the 'Daphne,' and were signed by the interpreter Murra, a native, the master Daggett, and the mate Foster, all of course interested parties,—it will be seen how easy it is to evade the law as it now stands.

Again, what is the meaning of the word "slave"? At the present moment I am as much in the dark as I was at the issue of the trial. To entice natives on board a vessel, by means of "artifice," or "even falsehood," and take them away and receive so much a head for them, is this not making slaves of them? Under the present Statute—No.

For a vessel to have false papers, and to be found in a totally contrary direction to the one she ought to be in, with double the number of natives crammed on board her, all naked, and without any one to interpret their wants, has this no bearing on the slave-trade?

Do not these proceedings tend "to promote and encourage the slave-trade," as the wording of the Act runs? Under the present Statute—No.

Then again I ask wherein does slavery consist?

The Chief Justice says:—

"From the perusal of the affidavits I can see that very considerable difficulty lies in Captain Palmer's way. If the averments in the affidavit of the claimant are proved, there can be no question that the captor's case must fail.

"Accordingly, I throw it out for the consideration of Captain Palmer and his advisers, whether or not it can really be proved that the 'Daphne' was, at the time of the capture, engaged in an adventure in contravention of the Statute against slave-trading, and whether or not, under the circumstances, it is prudent or advisable for the captor to proceed any further with the case."

There is no man in New South Wales whose

name stands higher than that of Sir Alfred Stephen, the Chief Justice, and consequently these hints of his gave me some anxiety, more particularly as I had every reason to believe his sympathies were with the islanders. I find my opinion was correct as to this, as a letter written by him to Lord Belmore at this time sufficiently shows, but which has only been just published.[1] But fully expecting Mr. Thurston to send me down overwhelming evidence as to the 'Daphne's' cruise, I was determined to risk the trial, as I felt it was absolutely necessary to expose the whole matter as far as I was able, being convinced in my own mind that a grievous wrong had been done.

During these proceedings the following notice appeared in the public papers :—

"Colonial Secretary's Office,
Brisbane, *July* 3, 1869.

"*Notice,—To all whom it may concern.*

"Whereas three licenses, dated January 6th, 1869, were issued under the Polynesian Labourers Act of 1868, by the Queensland Government, authorizing H. Ross Lewin, as agent for certain employers in this colony, to import 50 (fifty) Polynesian labourers in the schooner 'Daphne;' and whereas information has reached this Government that improper use has been made of such licenses, Notice is hereby given that the three licenses above

[1] See Appendix A.

mentioned have been this day cancelled, of which all persons concerned are requested to take notice.

"ARTHUR HODGSON,
Colonial Secretary of Queensland.

This was a step in the right direction : better late than never.

On the 19th of August the trial came on in the Vice-Admiralty Court, before Sir Alfred Stephen.[1] The evidence was the same as that given before the Water Police Court, with a few additions; among others were the following :—

Pritchard, the supercargo, and Foster, the mate, stated that when once the natives were on board the 'Daphne,' "they could not go on shore unless they swam," and, "they had no chance of getting on shore except by jumping overboard; four muskets were put in the stern-sheets of the boat under a small deck."

Fungi, a Maré man, said : "After the natives came on board they never went back to their islands; they could not go, because the ship sailed away." Again, "After Charley" (this was Charles Murra, the native interpreter) "went away at Tanna, there was no one to talk to them."

William Patteson, the cook, said : "The day after

[1] See trial of the 'Daphne' in the Vice-Admiralty Court of New South Wales.

the ship got there (Fiji), the pilot told him he would take them all (the natives) and give more than anybody else for them, or as much."

William Oliver, who had been engaged in ships conveying South Sea Islanders to Queensland, said: "He knew it as a fact that many of the natives taken to Fiji for a certain period were kept considerably over it, and two had been there over five and seven years."—"All the punishment he had seen inflicted on them was just taking a bit of a stick and striking them with it to keep them in subjection; there had been some difficulty in getting them returned, for the commodore looked into it the last time he was down there; it was only since Mr. Thurston insisted upon it that they had been returned."

The arguments of the Attorney-General and Mr. Davis for the Crown, and Mr. Gordon for the respondents, were heard on the 23d September,[1] and at the conclusion his Honour said: "All the *indicia* of a vessel being engaged in a slave traffic must be thrown out in the case of one engaged in a *legitimate traffic;*" and that "he had formed the opinion that these men were not slaves in any sense of the word, or intended to be dealt with as slaves." The 'Daphne' was therefore released.

[1] See Appendix B.

Owing to the Judge proceeding on circuit, he postponed his written judgment,[1] which I happened to see in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the Crown Solicitor, who acted as my proctor, not having sent it me.

His Honour granted me a certificate that I had "probable cause" for the seizure and prosecution of the 'Daphne,' and thus the matter ended.

Weeks afterwards, when all was over, I received a letter from Mr. Thurston, stating that at last he had found an interpreter, of the name of "Panniken," who spoke English fairly, and from whom he ascertained that the 'Daphne's' whole cruise was "a slaving one." A batch of natives from the island of Miow (Banks's group) had escaped at Tanna, carrying off Lewin's boat, but were "*recaptured.*"

Unfortunately, neither Panniken nor his townsfellows had any idea of an oath. As Mr. Thurston truly remarked, "Not being qualified to perjure themselves like Christians (?), their evidence would not be accepted."

The vessel bringing this letter, together with despatches for Lord Belmore, was wrecked on a reef, and hence the delay. But it does not appear that the evidence, however consistent it might have been, would have made the slightest difference. It

[1] See Appendix B.

however confirmed my opinion regarding the whole matter, and I congratulated myself that the way native labourers are obtained had been well ventilated.

The expenses of the trial came to £179, 5s. 5d., which I was assured, at one time, the colony would not permit me to pay, but nevertheless I had to do so, being unsuccessful in establishing my case.

A few months after, however, I had the satisfaction to see by the papers, that the First Lord of the Admiralty, in answer to a question put by the Hon. A. Kinnaird, had expressed the approval of Her Majesty's Government of my conduct, by ordering my expenses to be refunded, as well as giving me my promotion.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE following is an account of a tragedy that took place on board one of these *passenger* vessels :—

In October 1868, a vessel called the 'Young Australian,' a three-masted schooner, of 190 tons, left Sydney with a cargo for Levuka, and afterwards was employed getting men for the Fiji planters, under a license from the consul.[1] The master, Albert Ross Hovell, was known to him, and he had therefore no doubt but that those natives that might be engaged by him would be properly treated. Unfortunately the supercargo, named Hugo Levinger, and some of the crew, composed of Frenchmen, were not over scrupulous about the way they got hold of the islanders. Labour was much needed at Fiji, and a handsome price given for the "passage-money" of every native brought there.

On arriving at the New Hebrides she commenced picking up natives, and had on board about seventy,

[1] Mr. Thurston deeply regretted having given this license. He never issued another.

some cajoled by promises of tobacco and muskets, others forcibly taken. The boats that went for them *always went armed.* When off the island of Palma, two boats were sent, and remained away a considerable time, and it was then that the scene occurred that Mummy related to me at Tanna. As additional evidence was elicited at the trial of Hovell and Rangi at Sydney, and of Levinger at Melbourne, I shall give a brief sketch of this infamous transaction.

Josiah, a native of Rotumah, stated that he was in the boat with Rangi (the prisoner), and that they came across three natives in a canoe, and upon orders being given to cut them off, the natives leaped overboard and swam for the shore. They were immediately pursued by the boats; one man was dragged into his, and the two others into the one commanded by the second mate. The men did not speak their language (Rotumah), and they seemed afraid.

It will be remembered that Mummy also said one of the men was hooked by a boat-hook in the cheek, through which a hole was made.

The men it appears were then taken on board the vessel, and fed on the poop by Levinger, and shortly after forced down into the hold. Here

they found other men from different islands, whose language they did not know. In a short time a row commenced between them, owing, it is said, to the Tanna men jeering at the new-comers, one of whom, it seems, was a chief—this was the man that was wounded in the cheek. The Palma (or Paûm) men were now rendered furious at the treatment they were experiencing, and vented their rage on their companions in captivity; billets of wood and cocoa-nuts being flung about in the hold. Presently they burst open the hatch, and let fly everything they could find at the crew and a few Tanna men who were on deck; some of them had bows and arrows, and the hold was soon left in possession of the new-comers. It was then resolved to settle them, that is to say, to disable them, but not to kill them. Accordingly muskets were sent for, and two or three of the crew, amongst whom was Rangi, were told by Levinger to go down below and fire at them through some holes in the bulk-head, which commanded the hold; but as it was now getting dark, a ball of cotton was steeped in kerosene and placed on a long iron rod, and held down in the hold to light it up. By this means the crew were enabled to shoot the Palma men in safety, which they succeeded in doing only too well. It appears the supercargo, Levinger,

was to all intents and purposes in command of the ship, and this, it ought to be known, is generally the case. The management of the *native passengers* (who we see are not slaves in any sense of that most mysterious word) is entirely in the hands of the supercargo, the master (commonly styled the captain) troubling himself about nothing but the management and navigation of the vessel.

Two of the men fell dead at once, while the gallant old chief was only wounded, and still continued to fire his arrows at his dastardly assailants, and succeeded in wounding Erromanga Tom and Rotumah David, — the Frenchmen, Louis and Antoine, with Rangi, being securely sheltered while firing upon him.

Hovell, the master, did not appear to wish the men to be shot, but only to be disabled. As captain of the ship he was of course responsible for everything that took place on board, but he gave way before the master mind of the bigger villain, Levinger, who gave orders to shoot them.

When the three unfortunate creatures, who had been *fighting for their liberty on board of an English vessel*, were hauled up dead and bleeding from the hold, the old chief still retained a little life in him, which however was soon extinguished

by a Tanna man (probably the one who had been wounded by the arrow) splitting open his head with an axe; the bodies were then thrown overboard; and so ended this horrible and disgraceful affair.[1]

The result of the trial was the jury returning a verdict of guilty against Hovell, the master, and Rangi, the Erromangan, but *with a strong recommendation to mercy!* and the jury in Melbourne pronounced Levinger guilty of *manslaughter!* Consequently the court at Sydney sentenced the former men to death, but on the application of Sir James Martin, the prisoner's counsel, points were reserved for argument before a full court of judges.

These arguments were heard after a few days, in which objection was taken by Sir James Martin as to the witness Josiah, a Rotumah man, he not being a competent witness. He contended that the testimony of Josiah ought not to have been admitted in the absence of more positive and complete evidence that he understood the nature and obligation of an oath, and that the Bible upon which he was sworn was in fact—and was known by the witness to be—identical (except as to language) with what he called the "Rotumah Book." This man being of a savage race, which was not shown to have had any system

[1] See trial of Hovell and Levinger.

of religion or morality of its own, such as would render any form of oath binding upon his conscience, and who was not sworn according to any binding Pagan form, but as a Christian, had acquired all his knowledge upon the subject of Christianity and the Christian's oath from the teaching of some person, said to have been a missionary. There ought therefore, it was contended, to have been some proof as to the nature and extent of the religious knowledge which the witness had acquired by such teaching before he was allowed to be sworn to give evidence. There ought, in fact, to have been some positive assurance, not only in his belief in a Supreme Being, but of his knowledge that, by taking the oath, he invoked the Divine vengeance upon himself if he spoke falsely.

Of course the prisoner's counsel was exerting all his learning and ingenuity (which are great) for his clients, but it must be remembered that before Josiah was sworn, the Attorney-General asked him certain questions through a *sworn interpreter*, to test his capacity in this very respect. He had been baptized and taught by Mr. Fletcher, one of the Wesleyan missionaries in Rotumah, about Jesus, and about a Bible, which he called "the Book." He went to chapel, and he could read the "Rotumah

Book." Also he knew that if he told [illegible] he would be punished, and "go to hell." He did [illegible] know what the book before him was, but Mr. Flet[illegible] had taught him what an oath was.

On the interpreter explaining that the Bible before him was similar to a Rotumah Bible, he further said "that he believed if he kissed the book and told lies he would go to hell."

His Honour admitted the evidence, reserving, however, the point as to its admissibility, at the request of Sir James Martin.

We may well inquire what more was wanting to constitute a fit witness in a court of justice? The evidence of Mr. Charles Wood before the Royal Commission at Sydney was conclusive as to the general religious teaching of the Rotumah men. He says, with regard to those he himself got at the island, and brought to Queensland, "There are among the people many who have had a good deal of religious teaching. There is a native teacher among them, and they have regular services among themselves, and sing hymns. One day, having heard that a clergyman would preach at Copperfield, a distance of twelve miles from the station, they walked there, and at the end of the service one of them put a sovereign into the plate. His attention was called

to the magistrate by the collector, and the man said, 'It is quite right—half-a-crown from each of us.'"

Again he says, "Mr. Fletcher, the Wesleyan missionary, was at Rotumah when I was there. My men have never shown any dangerous proclivities. They are generally moral in their conduct, and I have heard from persons in Rotumah that they never knew of any cases of prostitution on the island. They are also honest; the boy I have in my service has had opportunities of stealing in abundance, but I never had reason to suspect him, and I would trust him to almost any extent."[1]

Bravo, Mr. Wood! Mr. Fletcher may well be as proud of his converts at Rotumah as Paul was of his at Philippi. But how long will he have cause to joy over them when once they get contaminated with the mean whites of Queensland?

Still we know that grace can do anything, and we will hope that the Rotumah converts may escape pollution.

Their Honours unanimously held that the testimony of Josiah had been properly received, and confirmed the sentence of death against Hovell and Rangi.

Lord Belmore, under guidance of his "responsible

[1] See evidence of Mr. C. Wood before the Royal Commission in 1869, at Sydney.

advisers," was pleased to remit the sentence of death in each case, the prisoners being ordered to penal servitude for life, with hard labour, the first three years in irons, which were however struck off after a few days, by order of the Colonial Secretary.

Hugo Levinger, the cleverest villain of the three, who ought to have had a gallows as high as Haman's, got off with *seven years' hard labour!*

The bare idea of a white man being hanged for shooting down a native, or any number of natives, is too much for the sensitive consciences of some people, and it must be a source of infinite satisfaction for them to know that the majority of the natives from the other islands are not admitted to give evidence in a court of justice, which the horrible story of Narquainambo or "Tanna Mary" proved.

This case—one of criminal assault—came before the Police Court at Brisbane, Queensland, on the 12th January 1869; but the clear and consistent evidence of two natives, although Christians, was all to no purpose: the bench, without any hesitation, ruled that there was no case whatever to go to a jury.

The trial, if it may be dignified by that name, created a sensation at the time in the neighbouring colony.

As the law now stands the following things may be done :—

1*st*, You may hire a vessel and fit her up precisely the same as an African slaver, and clear out from an English (colonial) port for an island, or other port, also colonial, but which you never intend to go near.

2*d*, By applying to the Queensland authorities you may easily get a license to engage "Polynesian labourers" for planters in that colony.

3*d*, You may always take loaded muskets with you when engaging these *free labourers*, as they are sometimes blind to the advantages to be derived from a visit to Queensland or the Fiji Islands.

4*th*, You may cunningly get a boat's crew at islands where the French flag is flying, and thus allay suspicion of any treachery, and moreover have no white man an actual witness to your proceedings.

5*th*, You may also cook up agreements between yourself and the natives you may have the good fortune to cajole or kidnap, in which you may tell any number of lies you like. Dates are not of the slightest consequence; it is true they are on shore among white men, but when ignorant savages are concerned you may antedate them or leave the dates out altogether, just as suits your convenience.

6*th*, Your log, generally considered so sacred, may

show you to have been at sea on a certain date, while you and your crew positively swear you were *engaging* natives, and that it is all a mistake. False entries in that book may affect other vessels carrying coals or guano ; but with passengers on board, more especially coloured ones, you need be under no apprehension of even a slight fine.

7th, You may violate the Imperial Passenger Act with perfect impunity, so long as you are carrying Polynesian labourers ; thus you may cram 122 souls on board a vessel of forty-eight tons.

8th, If you have the good fortune to fit out your vessel at Brisbane (and you are strongly recommended to do so), it will not be necessary to fulfil the port regulations too strictly regarding the "Polynesian Labour Act." For instance, don't fit your passenger deck with partitions, so as to form berths for the greater accommodation of your passengers. Again, you are *supposed* to give every man a blanket so as to protect his naked body from the bare boards, but do not trouble yourself with supplying such expensive luxuries, even supposing you are going to give them a dead beat to windward for three weeks.

9th, You have also the privilege of taking *any number* of immigrants in this manner to the Fiji Islands, if you think you will get "a better market

for them." Your having engaged to supply fifty for Queensland will not be any legal obstacle to your taking 100 to the Fijis.

10*th*, The absence of an interpreter to make known your passengers' wants, as also to enable them to hire out themselves as *free* labourers to the planters on their arrival at Fiji, need give you no trouble.

11*th*, Have no anxiety about taking any immigrants to a place where no government exists, under cover of a license received from an English colony, because the law cannot touch you.

12*th*, If you should think it necessary to shoot any of your passengers who may at any time object to your treatment of them (and there are always some grumblers), remember that, as not one in a hundred among the natives of the New Hebrides as yet understands the nature of an oath, you will, if you have sufficient tact and ingenuity, get off with a few years' imprisonment, as poor Levinger did the other day, a martyr to the cause of free-labour.

Lastly, If, by a combination of unforeseen circumstances, you should find yourself in a position you have not bargained for, and that one of Her Britannic Majesty's consuls diplomatically, and the captain of one of Her Majesty's cruisers nautically,

consider you richly deserve to be hanged, go down on your knees and thank God you have got a white skin.

These few hints will be found exceedingly useful to skippers and supercargoes, unless in the meantime the Imperial Government should happen to differ with this colonial interpretation of English law, and which a recently published despatch from Lord Granville to the Governor of Queensland seems to indicate.[1]

[1] See Appendix C.

CHAPTER XV.

THE introduction of native labourers into Queensland appears to have already given the legislators of that colony some little trouble.

It would naturally be supposed that self-interest would have prevailed with the planters in their treatment of these people when once landed on their shores, as there is no race of men so easily managed if treated with kindness and justice; but in several instances this has not been done, for notwithstanding that many of the owners of estates are humane men, the complaints of native labourers have been increasing to an alarming extent in the colony.

As a proof, however, that this is not general, the late Governor of Queensland says that many Polynesians then serving in the colony have come back, after revisiting their homes.[1]

It would be interesting to know how many, and from which islands.

[1] See despatch of Governor Blackall to Earl Granville, dated 17th Nov. 1869.

Let it not be supposed that because some interested people connive at injustice, therefore the Queensland public do so.

This is very far from being the case. The whole press of Australia, all honour to it, had long denounced the deeds that had been going on among the islands, as well as the events that had occurred in Queensland, and which quite naturally followed the introduction of native cheap labour into that or any other colony.

We have only to look at the West India Islands and the Southern States of America, South Africa and Batavia, to see how the thin end of the wedge, called "forced native labour," soon degenerates into slavery, and gradually, but too surely, brutalizes the character of the whole community, unless the Christian portion becomes strong enough to get a stop put to it.

As early as January 1869, before the "Polynesian Labour Act" was passed in the Queensland Legislature, a petition was forwarded (through the acting Governor, O'Connell) to the Queen, praying that the "*traffic in human beings*"[1] might be stopped; but unfortunately *cheap labour* was so important to

[1] See copy of a despatch from the acting Governor O'Connell to his Grace the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos, dated Brisbane, 27th January 1868 (Enclosure I. in No. 4).

the infant colony that this traffic, under certain restraints, became legalized. It does not say much for the policy of those who permitted it to pass, with the examples of other countries before their eyes.

Let the Australian press speak for itself.

"The establishment of a slave trade in these seas has been so long proved, that no one can entertain any doubt of its existence. Every class of men has borne testimony to the *ruse* and violence developed in this trade. It has been affirmed by the missionaries. Bishop Patteson, as the representative of one society—the numerous agents of the London Missionary Society—the members of the Scottish Mission—and the Wesleyan Society—have all corroborated the general complaint, and have implored the Christians of this country to awaken to the wickedness perpetrated at their doors. By what we think a somewhat mistaken policy, a petition was sent from this colony to the Queensland Parliament, instead of to the Queen, asking the suppression of this trade. No extravagance of courtesy was shown in the mode of its reception; in fact, it was fairly pitched out. Such we might have expected, because it is not likely that where lucrative crime originates we shall find the instruments of its suppression. It is the British Government to which our appeals ought to be presented, and those classes of the British nation who have fought with success against the most gigantic form of slavery and the slave trade that ever existed in the world."[1]

"The more inquiry into the Polynesian Labour question is prosecuted, the clearer it becomes that nothing less than a species of slavery is intended to be perpetrated by the planters of Queensland. Every precaution is taken to conceal this intention from the Australian public; and perhaps, in many cases,

[1] *Sydney Morning Herald*, Saturday, May 22, 1869.

those who are the most determined advocates for the introduction of Polynesians, have deluded themselves into believing a lie.

"While every just-minded person must deprecate the stretching of the law, or impatience in arriving at conclusions on insufficient evidence against individuals connected with the deportation of Polynesians, it is impossible not to feel some chagrin at the apparent failure of all efforts hitherto made to put a stop to the cruel practices by which these islanders are from time to time entrapped, exiled from their native lands, and exposed to hardships and death, in order that the cupidity of kidnappers and their employers may be gratified." [1]

"That noble, generous England should pay twenty millions to emancipate the West Indian slaves; that she should keep a squadron on the west coast of Africa, at an enormous amount in men and money; that gallant officers and noble-minded men should, in defiance of one of the worst climates in the earth, unite all their energy and zeal for the suppression of the infamous slave trade, and yet find it being resuscitated in a British colony, and carried on in British owned and registered vessels, is enough to make the blood boil with indignation. When the American civil war gave the death-blow to slavery in the Southern States of America, we imagined that the word *slave* was a word only to be used in connexion with the past, little dreaming that Australia was to be disgraced by such a traffic." [2]

"The imputation of slavery is denied, and even sleek oily men in sable broadcloth are found to stand forth in defence of the man-stealers; but all who know anything of the north are well aware that the hankering after cheap labour is a chronic complaint there, and I don't think that anything can cure it unless the example that would be afforded by a cannibal rebellion of some of the South Sea Islanders on the stations, and the con-

[1] *Sydney Empire*, 6th October and 17th November 1869.
[2] *The Mudgee Liberal*, May 1869.

version of their masters or owners into carbonadoes for tiffin. . . . The pretence that these people are alone suited to the climate of the extreme north is all rubbish, for the very same persons who advocate their introduction, and assist in it, are those who used every exertion to get a station for European prisoners established at Rockingham Bay, Cape York, or at the Gulf of Carpentaria—thus giving a wide range of choice, but all far away north, and all intended as depots to supply the labour market. Cheap work is the *desideratum* at the bottom of all; and the desire for it causes as much demoralization as the *auri sacra fames* of which it forms a part." [1]

That slavery, as it existed in the West Indies or America, is in force in the colony of Queensland, is out of the question; we know wages are given—and as soon as you give wages to a man for his work, however small they may be, he ceases to be a slave to you; but at the same time that very man may have been torn away from his island by licensed agents. You as a planter may not know that,—you hope at least that such was not the case; but having got him you intend to make use of him, and the least you ought to do *is to insure* that he shall receive kindness and justice at your hands. Has this been done in Queensland? Let the following circumstances, taken from *The Empire*, Sydney, of August 4, 1869, speak for themselves:—

"The South Sea Island Labour question is assuming a new phase in Queensland. The Brisbane journals teem with ac-

[1] *Sydney Evening News*, May 1869.

counts of the doings of some of these savages who have taken to the bush, and appear to be keeping the residents of the districts in which they are at large in a state of great alarm. The *Brisbane Courier* publishes letters from several parties who complain strongly of the conduct of the roaming islanders, and in its issue of Friday last thus comments upon the matter:—

"'The letter, signed by several respectable residents of Tingalpa, which appeared in our columns yesterday, describes a state of things that ought not to be permitted to continue a day longer. . . . It is not possible to conceive a more wretched state of existence than that of savages such as these escaping from their masters, and making for themselves dens like wild beasts, outlawed, or outlawing themselves, from all society, and living by plundering the settlers of the district. A few months of such an existence would be enough to render civilized men savage, and to make men like these islanders beasts of prey; and that such a condition of things should be permitted, after its existence had been satisfactorily proved to the authorities, would be utterly scandalous to any civilized community. . . . With the help of some of the people of the place, one man was taken; it does not appear certain that he was the fellow who had been prowling about Mr. Preston's house, but it is certain that he is one of the number living in the scrub, as has been described, and that he resisted violently, and had to be wounded before he could be taken. He is brought to Brisbane; his wounds, which are not of a dangerous nature, are attended to, and he is taken out of the custody of the police, and sent to the Immigration Depot—we presume to give any new chum who may still be about a notable illustration of what may happen in Queensland. Mr. Preston and the constable who captured Moolang are arrested and held to bail for wounding with intent, and we suppose it was intended to put that enlightened individual in the witness-box and these men into the dock, though how his story could be got at, and what value such evidence, supposing it could be taken, would have

with a jury, it is not easy to see. But Moolang, disdaining to be a party to the farce, took "French leave" of his protector, Mr. M'Donnell, and we presume the noble savage has by this time found his way back to his silvan retreat at Tingalpa. . . . It is asserted, on the authority of respectable residents, that several of these islanders infest the district of Tingalpa and Doughboy Creek; that they steal the property of the settlers, who, moreover, believe that the lives of themselves and their families are endangered by the presence of those savages, and who really appear to have good reason for thinking so. The question is, how long this state of things is to be permitted to continue? It is utterly disgraceful, and it may have most serious consequences. To have to hunt down those men, and take them, dead or alive, is a most revolting task, and it may be a most difficult one, but it must be done, and such means must be taken as will satisfy the people that there is no probability that any will have escaped, to be a source of future terror and danger to the neighbourhood. If they can be taken alive and without maiming them, so much the better, but caught they should be as speedily as possible.'"

"The *Queensland Express* of the 28th ultimo gives the following account of the capture of the man referred to in the above extract from the *Courier*:—

"'For some months past the inhabitants of Tingalpa have suffered serious losses, in consequence of several South Sea Islanders being at large in that neighbourhood, and breaking into their farms and injuring their crops, apparently for the purpose of obtaining food to appease their hunger. These men, it is supposed, are of the number of those who, about eight months since, escaped from a vessel lying in the bay, and swam ashore, and are now prowling about the scrubs adjacent to Tingalpa and the Logan River. A settler at Tingalpa (Mr. James Preston) states that on Thursday last, his daughter, aged about twelve years, whilst washing at a waterhole in his paddock, about

200 yards from his house, saw a South Sea Islander crawling towards her, holding a "tremendous waddy" in his hands, as if he were about to throw it at her. Believing that he intended mischief, she screamed out, whereupon the Islander became alarmed in turn, and ran back a short distance. On Mr. Preston coming to his daughter's assistance, Matalaw, as the Islander called himself when arrested by the police, made off out of sight into the bush. About half an hour afterwards, Matalaw was seen stalking slyly through a small patch of sugar-cane close to Mr. Preston's dwelling-house. Some dogs were set upon him, and he cleared out. Information was given to the police, and sergeant Canning and some black trackers were ordered to trace his whereabouts, and if possible arrest him. The police came on one of his camps on Sunday afternoon, where they discovered some spears, and a portion of an old scythe. On seeing the police Matalaw made off; sergeant Canning and the trackers gave chase, in company with some settlers, and after some trouble surrounded him, but failed to arrest him until some shots were fired at, and lodged in his legs, which brought him to the ground. We are unable to state how many times he was fired at, but we have been informed that two shots were discharged at him. Being in a state of nudity when captured, he was clothed, his wounds dressed, and conveyed the same afternoon in a spring cart to the Brisbane police station, where, on arrival, Drs. Bell and Hobbs attended him. The wounds are flesh wounds, and are not considered dangerous. He is progressing favourably, and this is evidenced by the fact that on Monday morning he ate a loaf of bread for his breakfast. During Monday he was removed to the Immigration Depot. A charge of stealing from the premises has been laid against him, but in consequence of weakness by loss of blood, the hearing of the charge was adjourned. Mr. M'Donnell, the Immigration Agent, acting under the provisions of the Polynesian Labourers Act, has preferred a charge of unlawfully wounding against Sergeant Canning and Mr. Preston;

they were subsequently arrested, but admitted to bail themselves in £80, and two sureties of £40 each in each case.'

"Another feature as regards these Islanders is the increasing frequency of cases of complaint before the police courts—sometimes on the part of the men, and in others on the part of their masters. In the proceedings of the Queensland Assembly, on July 22, as reported in the *Courier* of the following day, we find the following:—

"'Mr. Jordan asked the Colonial Secretary—If he has observed that the police magistrate at Claremont, as reported in the *Express* of this morning, has recently sentenced a number of Polynesian labourers to the forfeiture of the whole of their wages, £18 each?—Mr. A. Hodgson replied,—Yes. By a return forwarded by the police magistrate, Clermont, to the Immigration Agent, decision was given under 25th section of Polynesian Labourers Act, which refers to engagements, subject to the Masters and Servants Act, 25 Victoria, No. 11, s. 3; thirteen discharged, wages forfeited, and their agreements cancelled; five fined £10, or fourteen days' imprisonment; eight confined one night, and return to work.'"

Captain Lambert, in a letter to the Immigration Agent, dated 12th August 1869, says that when he visited the Banchory station he found the natives "perfectly happy and contented." By the date of his letter, this visit took place a fortnight *after* the return he forwarded to Mr. Hodgson. The natives appear to have suddenly and most unaccountably changed their minds.

The following is the police report of the affair at Tingalpa:—

"The case of unlawfully wounding a Polynesian, by Sergeant Canning, was investigated at the Police Court, Brisbane, on Thursday last, a report of which appears in the *Courier* as follows:—

"'John Henry Canning, acting-sergeant of police, stationed at Cleveland, was charged with unlawfully wounding one Matalong, a Polynesian, on or about the 25th of July last, at Tingalpa. Mr. Little, the Crown Prosecutor, appeared for the Crown; and Mr. Pring, Q.C., appeared for the defence.

"'James Preston deposed that he saw Canning on Saturday the 24th July, who made inquiries about some islanders supposed to be running wild in the bush; he told him there were at least two; asked him if he were a police officer, and he answered Yes; saw Canning again on the Sunday morning, in chase of one of the islanders he had spoken to him about; he had four aboriginal natives with him; they were all running after the Polynesian; he (Preston) tried to stop him; he had a waddy or club in his hand, similar to the ones produced; they were very formidable weapons; there were no marks of blood about him at that time; the blacks had tomahawks in their hands, but did not see fire-arms with them; he then lost sight of them for about a quarter of an hour, and again saw Canning before the black fellow with his club uplifted, in the act of defence, and apparently ready to strike; at this time the islander was bleeding from some slight flesh wounds; on the road to Brisbane, Canning said that he had been attacked by the man, and had been obliged to fire on him; he was then carried to the lock-up, Brisbane, and delivered to the keeper.

"'By Mr. Pring—He and a Mr. Dawson had a sugar plantation in the neighbourhood; saw Mr. Dawson with a gun in his hand on that day, at his (Preston's) house; he told him he had been in the plantation watching for the Polynesians; great depredations had been committed, and many articles had been stolen in the neighbourhood by these men; the inhabitants having been

in great fear for more than a month previously, and females were not safe at any distance from their homes; these men were very savage.

"'Dr. Hobbs deposed to having examined the Polynesian on the 25th ultimo, at the lock-up; there were three pistol-shot wounds on his person—one on the fleshy part of the outer side of the left thigh, one on the fleshy part of the inner side of the right thigh, and a third on the fleshy part of the left side of the chest; there were no contused wounds about him.

"'James Dawson, a farmer in the neighbourhood, corroborated the testimony of Preston on the main points, and stated that the Polynesian, while he was chasing him, dropped a scythe-blade, which he (Dawson) picked up, which was subsequently claimed by Preston as having been stolen from his premises about a week previously; he (Dawson) had a gun, but did not discharge it.

"'Michael Doyle, the lock-up keeper, proved the receipt of the prisoner at the lock-up.

"'John Lewis, inspector of the southern district of police, deposed to having sent a telegram to Canning on July 23, to the following effect: "Wild South Sea islander, dangerous to Preston, Richardson, and others at Tingalpa. Employ black fellows and run him down. If possible capture him and bring him to Brisbane." He acted upon instructions received from his superior officer; Canning had reported several cases of larceny as having been committed by the islander, and as he had been in chase of him before, he employed Canning in preference to sending a man from Brisbane; had known Canning some years; he was a first-class man, and one not at all likely to unnecessarily use fire-arms.

"'Mr. Pring briefly addressed the bench, and pointed out that Canning was perfectly justified in his action, more especially as a larceny had been proved to have been committed in the case of the scythe-blade. The bench were of the same opinion, and dis-

missed the case, adding that Sergeant Canning was justified in using his fire-arms in self-defence.'

"Our Peak Downs contemporary has the following:—

"'The unfortunate Polynesians who refused to complete their engagements at Banchory, and were in consequence turned adrift on our streets penniless, after subsisting by private charity for about a fortnight, have with three exceptions gone down the road to Rockhampton, in the hope of getting back to their island home, Maré. They were anxious to obtain work here, with "white man's rations," with the intention of going home when they had saved enough money, but only three were successful.[1] The poor fellows held a religious service in the Court-house on Sunday afternoon, and conducted Divine worship with marked decorum. They were provided with hymn-books and portions of the Bible printed in their own language, and sang with the average proficiency of an English congregation. One of the number preached an extempore sermon, and apparently fulfilled that duty in an earnest, eloquent, and effective manner. It seems a pity that men so well conducted, and so unfitted for bush life, should be brought here to engage in an occupation like shepherding. On the coast plantations they are probably a success, and to the coast they ought to be confined, at least until they have acquired familiarity with our language and pursuits.'"

All this is done under shelter of the "Polynesian Labourers Act." Ross Lewin told Mr. Wood, who wanted to go down to the islands with him so as to judge for himself whether the natives were fairly engaged, *that he was not going to let him see how*

[1] These were evidently not the ones whom Captain Lambert found "perfectly happy and contented" at the same station.

things were carried on, and that he only took a black crew with him in his boat when he went on shore.[1]

The Rev. P. Sunderland, agent for the London Missionary Society, when examined before the Royal Commission at Sydney,[2] did not give a very pleasant picture of the way in which some of the largest plantations are carried on. He visited one that belongs to a Mr. Raff, and found the natives, about sixty or seventy in number, in their wooden shed, "fitted up with a sort of shelf of saplings, upon which they slept." He describes them as "sitting naked, very much like what I had seen on the islands among the heathen tribes." The place was full of fleas. Upon asking the Maré men some questions (as he was able to converse with them), they told him, "We have been deceived as to the term of our engagements; we came here for twelve months, and when we arrived here we found that we had to stay for a longer time—three years." With regard to the work, they said, "It is very hard work; very hard work indeed."

"But," said Mr. Sunderland, "they say you are very happy here, and very contented."

[1] Mr. Charles Wood's evidence before the Royal Commission in 1869, at Sydney.

[2] See evidence of Mr. Sunderland before the Royal Commission in 1869, at Sydney.

"Well," said they, "we go to the work we have to do, and do it; but if they could look into our hearts, they would find we were crying for our land constantly." They also complained of the food and clothes.

Mr. Sunderland says: "I saw them turn out to work in the morning; one man had a flannel shirt on, I think he was an Ambrym man, that was all he had; some had a little bit of cloth round their loins, and nothing else; one or two had put on new duck trousers. Generally speaking, they were miserably badly clothed." They also complained of being mixed with cannibals and heathens from other islands, being all housed together. Mr. Raff, junior, the son of the proprietor, said to Mr. Sunderland, "They (the natives) are afraid of me, they know I never go about without something in my belt;" and as regarded the treatment of them when sick, said, "It does not do to allow them to lie down; if they do, they soon get disheartened."[1]

On Mr. Sunderland asking him about punishments, he said: "It is a long way to go to a magistrate; I will give you an illustration of how we do. One native took a bottle of rum; he was one of the heathen islanders, and I know they are very frightened in the

[1] See evidence of the Rev. P. Sunderland before the Royal Commission in 1869, at Sydney.

dark; therefore I fitted up a dark room, and put irons on him. He came out as quiet as a lamb, and I had no more trouble with him."[1]

Mr. Sunderland says, "As we were driving down he said, 'They may call it what they like, but it is slavery,'—that was the testimony of Mr. Raff, junior, himself."[2]

It is only fair to Mr. Raff (senior) to say that when examined before the Select Committee at Brisbane, he declared the statements that Mr. Sunderland had made were false, and could only account for their being made by the "depravity of human nature."

But Mr. Raff allows that twenty of his men went and "made a complaint to a magistrate that they did not get sufficient food."[3]

Doubtless these were some of the Loyalty islanders who had been under the *corrupting* influence of the missionaries, Messrs. Jones and Creagh!

In a great number of cases the islanders have complained of insufficient food, bad treatment, and receiving blows and kicks, and when they complain before the magistrates they are dismissed

[1] See evidence of the Rev. P. Sunderland before the Royal Commission in 1869, at Sydney. [2] *Ibid.*

[3] See the evidence of Mr. Raff before the Select Committee in June 1869, at Brisbane.

without their wages, sent to the lock-up, or back to their masters.

This is how the "Polynesian Labourers Act" works. Why were several clauses that would have afforded more protection to the natives, struck out when the Bill came before the Legislature?

Comment is needless here, and surely gentlemen in Queensland itself, and in the neighbouring colony of New South Wales, have a right to take alarm, and protest against such a state of things.

But not only have Christian men of all denominations in New South Wales raised their voice, but the people of Brisbane have but recently addressed a memorial to the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, praying for a repeal of the "Polynesian Labourers Act of 1868."[1]

It is not at all likely this will be listened to for one moment, as too many of the members of this Assembly own runs and speculations themselves, many having partners in Sydney, who of course use all their interest to keep up the traffic, as every "nigger" that is imported into the country is so many pounds sterling into their pockets,—the cost of a "nigger" being about £30 a year, or just half that of a European labourer.

[1] See Appendix D.

CHAPTER XVI.

WHAT is it that causes a certain class of persons to throw off all restraint and decency when they live under a tropical sun, and see other human beings with skins darker than their own?

It is like flourishing a red flag before a bull to show an aboriginal of the South Sea Islands to some Englishmen, with the thermometer at 90° in the shade. They go mad.

A howl is heard from the islands about every three or four months, not from the islanders, but from white residents, in consequence of some boat's crew having been killed and eaten, and an urgent request that a man-of war may be sent to demand satisfaction is despatched to the commodore.

Of course only one side of the question is ever heard, the chief's answer invariably being,—"We killed them in revenge for our countrymen who have been stolen away, and often killed as well;" and as this is an acknowledgment of guilt on their part, a

few villages are shelled as a lesson not to take the law into their own hands. Nothing is done to the white ruffians who have been the original cause of all this misery—they are most likely carrying on their accursed trade elsewhere, and laying the foundation of some other massacre ; but now and then, as we have seen, the Almighty allows them to be caught in their own net.

Who can wonder at these acts of revenge, when we remember the deeds that have been committed by the "*sailing profligates,*" as the early sandal-wood traders were justly called by the natives ? The scoundrels gave them their first impressions of *civilisation*, which consisted chiefly in lying and treachery, interspersed with repeated acts of arson and murder.

At the close of 1842, three English vessels were at Vaté, having on board a number of Tongese for cutting sandal-wood. The white crew began helping themselves to everything about them, carrying off about 200 hogs and a quantity of yams, and, not content with that, destroyed a great deal of native property. Of course fighting soon commenced, when twenty-six Vatése were killed ; the remainder fled to a cave, where the Tongans, piling up wood before it, set fire to it, and soon suffocated them.

Shortly after they massacred the crew of the 'Cape Packet' in revenge.

At the island of Maré, three men swam off to a vessel that had called for sandal-wood, and while bargaining with the master were murdered in cold blood. Two died on the spot, and the third leapt overboard, but was eventually shot in the water. The next thing we hear is the massacre of the crew of the 'Lady Ann' in December of the same year.

Ten young men were kidnapped as early as 1856 from Lifu, and taken to Sydney. They had gone on board to sell some things, were battened down in the hold, and let up on deck the next day. They were made to cut sandal-wood on Espiritu Santo, and were sold at the island of Ascension for pigs, yams, and firewood.

Six out of the ten managed to effect their escape in a vessel to Hong-Kong, where five of them died. The remaining four were helped by the American missionaries, and taken to Honolulu. Here the Rev. S. C. Damon, whom I well remember there, in 1856, kindly sent them on to Rarotonga, where the 'John Williams' ultimately landed them on their own island, after an absence of more than three years.

The murder of the crew of the 'Sisters'[1] from Sydney, was occasioned by the master rope's-ending a chief during a bargain over some yams.

Again, the massacre of the native teachers at the Isle of Pines was owing to muskets being fired at some natives who were actually bringing a present to the master of the brig 'Star.'

The wretches cared nothing about the lives of those on shore, one bit more than did the master of the American whaling ship in August 1842, at Tanna, who fired into the natives, to the imminent danger of the missionaries who had just landed.

Mr. Neilson's establishment on Tanna makes it the *fifth* time the Scotch Presbyterian mission has attempted the conversion of the natives. How long will it last if —— and Company are permitted to carry on their deeds of treachery?

One vessel called the 'Edwards' actually introduced the *small-pox* at Tanna; the master, whose name was Thomas, never gave them the slightest warning, but remained at Port Resolution three weeks, while the natives had free access to the ship the whole time, which ended in the death of three native teachers and several natives.[2]

[1] *Missions in Western Polynesia*, by A. W. Murray, p. 351.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 153.

I have given some specimens of the sort of way things are managed amongst the islands, and the complaints the chiefs and others made me during my recent cruise; but the traders have resorted to a cleverer dodge for filling their vessels, which, however, can only be practised once at the same part of the island. Their proceedings are somewhat as follows:—A vessel painted white like the mission schooner, and about the time Bishop Patteson is going his rounds, appears in sight off an island. A boat is sent on shore with the most respectable-looking of the white individuals on board, having a white choker on, blue spectacles, a book that may pass for a Bible under his arm, and an umbrella over his head. The news quickly spreads,—"Bishop come to see us!" and down they crowd to the beach.

The boat nears the shore—ah! this is not the Bishop, but a strange missionary. He speaks a little of the language, however, and says the Bishop is on board the schooner, but had a bad accident the other day at sea, falling down and breaking his leg, so he cannot stop long, but must go to Sydney to the doctor. He wants to see his dear friends on board before he goes, as he cannot come on shore to them. They are indeed sorry to hear the Bishop has broken his leg. Several send their wives home for cocoa-

nuts, yams, and bananas, while they themselves go off to see him. The strange missionary will stroll along the beach, and do a little bit of geology before he goes on board.

Soon the canoes are flying over the water towards the schooner, and from the time the boat first touched the beach, between fifty and sixty natives are on their way to see their kind friend Bishop Patteson, whose name, among these islands, is never alluded to but with love, admiration, and respect.

On reaching the vessel, which has drawn out a little from the shore, they are welcomed on board, and allowed to go about where they like, for only three or four can be admitted to the small cabin at a time, as the good Bishop must have plenty of air, and it is very close down below.

The first comers go down the companion, and at the bottom are received, not by the Bishop, but by some of the crew, who, with pistols pointed to their heads, pass them into the vessel's hold through an aperture in the bulkhead, cut for the purpose, where their hands are tied behind them, and they are left to ruminate on the advantages of civilisation, and the blessings which follow in its train. Being speedily joined by others, till the hold is full, they are perfectly helpless, the hatches above having been pre-

viously well secured, and everything made ready for their reception. Nothing can be known on shore of what is going on, and soon canoes laden with fruit are alongside, while the women and others imagine their husbands are down below with his lordship, and thus supplies for the voyage to Queensland or Fiji are laid in, and at last the strange missionary is seen pulling back to the schooner, which, on his arrival, stands out to sea, cutting adrift the canoes; the women, at last perceiving the treachery, raise their voices in screams and lamentations, only to be laughed at by the brutal ruffians on board.

Although I do not pretend to say the above transaction was the actual *modus operandi*, I have the authority of Bishop Patteson as to the *fact* of its being committed, in which his supposed broken leg and its attendant consequences has been made to figure.

During his last cruise, in 1869, serious thoughts were entertained for his safety, owing to the villanies that were reported from time to time as taking place among the islands.

It would not require any great amount of shrewdness for me to lay my hand on the "strange missionary."

Mr. John M'Donnell, the Queensland Immigration Agent, stated before the Select Committee, that up

to the end of the year 1868, there had been 2711 Polynesians introduced into the colony; 308 had left, 150 had died, *and* 160 *were unaccounted for*, leaving a balance of 2093; and up to the 1st May 1869 there were 2220.[1]

This same Select Committee came to the conclusion that "no unnecessary obstacles should be placed in the way of their (the Polynesians') introduction," recommending at the same time that they "shall be deemed competent witnesses in courts of justice, due care being taken that they are made aware of their obligation to speak the truth."

The Royal Commission at Sydney concluded its labours on the 27th September 1869, and says, "On a review of the whole question, the Commissioners think it possible that, under proper regulations, Polynesian labour may be introduced into Queensland with manifest advantage to the sugar and cotton-growing interests of that colony."

Why, this is what is already going on. It does not require "proper regulations" to give advantage to the planters; quite the reverse. Many would sooner have no regulations at all. But how about the interests of the labourers introduced? It

[1] See evidence of Mr. J. M'Donnell before the Select Committee in June 1869, at Brisbane.

is just possible Her Majesty would have liked to have had their opinion upon this question, more particularly as the chairman[1] owned an estate in Queensland, and two or three other members were also intimately connected with that colony.

Great pains were taken to throw dust even into my eyes, not only by gentlemen, but ladies, who assured me that on *their* plantations the dear interesting islanders were well treated and cared for; and I have not the least doubt that on some estates they are looked after well and very kindly treated; but the complaint is, that many planters have grossly abused their powers, and they have been supported in so doing.

I have only cited a tithe of the cases that have occurred, in which injustice has been done, under cover of a colonial Act of Parliament.

These proceedings however have not failed to attract the attention of those in the colony who were Christians, and who, together with sensible men, had long foreseen the evils that would assuredly follow in the wake of the Immigration Act, and had the fear constantly before them that the colony would gradu-

[1] Mr. Rolleston, the chairman, seemed most anxious to place the coloured immigration under the strictest supervision, and, when the author was under examination before the Commission, repeatedly expressed his wish to that effect.

ally sink, if not into a slave-holding community, at least into one only slightly removed from it.

Some men have striven to show that the natives must ultimately derive great benefit from coming to Queensland. Do the facts already cited give any warrant for supposing this ?

Does herding them together like cattle, working them from sunrise to sunset, giving them no instruction, feeding them insufficiently, local magistrates denying them justice, and mulcting them of eighteen months' wages at once, tend to improve them ?

Where are the 160 *missing ones* from the Immigration Agent's roll, which does not include those that have died ?

Besides all this, the opinion of several witnesses before the Select Committee goes to prove that the natives are worse instead of better for coming to Queensland.

Mr. James Row said : " As to the moral aspect of this question, I have scarcely seen an islander who has returned from service at Queensland or Fiji who has not learned more harm than good by coming in contact with the whites—not only as to drinking ; they become great rogues and thieves. I would sooner trust my life on a downright savage

island, than on one where the people were half civilized, and had been among whites." [1]

And with regard to the so-called engagements entered into by some of these islanders, he says,—"I question very much whether the interpreter himself even could explain to them what three years, or thirty-six moons, meant, for they can count only as far as five at many of the islands." [2]

Mr. John Macdonald (junior) says,—"I do not think it is possible for an Englishman, not knowing the language of a particular island from which the natives are taken, to make them understand the nature of an agreement, such as is made on behalf of the employers of labour. Without the ordinary communication from one mind to another, it is simply impossible. The habits of the people in these islands are so different from our own, that it would be utterly impossible to give them our idea of the nature of an agreement." [3]

If Queensland *must* have native labour (which I have found good reason to believe is unnecessary apart from the cupidity of certain planters), why do not the Queensland Government go to work in good

[1] See evidence of Mr. James Row before the Royal Commission in 1869, at Sydney. [2] *Ibid.*

[3] See evidence of Mr. John Macdonald (junior) before the Royal Commission in 1869, at Sydney.

faith, and place it under *the strictest supervision*, by having only *known vessels* (say four), with masters and supercargoes of unblemished character and reputation, so as to insure fair play? why don't they have well-paid officials at Tanna and Rotumah? and above all, when once in Queensland and under British rule, see that the natives are treated with justice and consideration. *This has yet to be done.* It is sad to contemplate men countenancing a great evil in their midst, so blinded by gain that they are unable to see the ruinous effects it must ultimately have, not only on the country, but on themselves also.

The Home Government have issued strict orders to check this inter-insular traffic in natives, but as it is to a certain extent—and I have shown how far—legalized by a Colonial Act of Parliament, it is not easy to see what the captains of Her Majesty's cruisers can do in the matter.

They will however have the whip-hand over the Fijis, *provided* a man-of-war is stationed there to act in concert with the French at New Caledonia;[1] but if a vessel is only to be sent round the islands once or

[1] Both the American and French Governments have given orders for their cruisers to act with ours. See despatches from Mr. Thornton and Lord Lyons to Lord Clarendon, in Parliamentary papers.

twice during the year, the "passenger" vessels may, with a little clever dodging, do what they like.

There are noble-minded men and women in Queensland who blush for the slur that has justly been cast on their colony, as with all deference to the learned Chief Justice of New South Wales, I for one cannot agree with him that the Queensland Government have done all in their power to see the Polynesian immigration so managed that as little injury as possible should result from it. (See Appendix B, page 203).

We may be sure that the gentlemen who, both in Queensland and New South Wales, are now lifting up their voices against these proceedings, will receive the attention of the Home Government.

They have seen the working of the Labour Act in their midst, and its evil results. They cannot be accused of mercenary motives, and they now ask for its repeal.

If this is not speedily done, with our vaunted hatred of slavery, and all the evils that follow in its train, we shall become a laughing-stock to the rest of the civilized world.

Professor Sheldon Amos, in a paper read at the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, in February last, says,—"The name 'con-

tract' may put men off their guard, and obstruct all investigation into the presence or absence of that unhampered exercise of the reason which contract, in truth, essentially implies. Services recklessly, imprudently, ignorantly, or compulsorily promised, if enforced after the alleged promise, by a severe and partial law of contract, this law being administered by interested or incompetent officials, may result, as was the case in early Rome, in the most intolerable, because the most plausible and unassailable, kind of slavery. The system of coolie immigration to the West Indian Islands, affords as good an illustration as could be wished for of the dangerous probability of a revival of the worst features of slavery, under the cloak of free and untrammelled industry, regulated by nothing else than voluntary contract."

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX A.

(Page 148.)

Sir Alfred Stephen *to* Earl Belmore.

Sub-enclosure No. 2.—Parliamentary Paper in No. 6.

Orielton, 10*th July* 1869.

My dear Lord Belmore,—I have written a full report on Sir James Martin's letter, and the petition transmitted with it. Mr. Justice Hargrave has also written some observations. Mr. Justice Cheeke, however, is out of town; on his return on Monday he will probably add a few remarks, and I will then forward the whole of the papers to the Colonial Secretary. That which follows is unofficial, and as I am about to touch on a topic not colonial, one at least that affects no colony in particular, and this colony, if at all, in a very remote degree, and indirectly only, I claim the privilege of addressing myself to your Excellency alone.

The case of the 'Daphne,' and the shocking occurrence on board the 'Young Australian,' as well as the representations from Mr. Neilson, published by Dr. Steele, all tend to show that some legislative action is urgently required on the part of the Imperial Government. It may not be thought proper entirely to abolish the importation of Polynesian labourers into the colonies, or still less, perhaps, into the Fiji Islands, over which Great

Britain has no control, but it seems highly expedient that all such importations, and the trade which is connected with them, should be placed by Parliament under stringent regulations.

It strikes me forcibly that the disposal of arms and ammunition to these savage people should be prohibited; certainly where the sale is to such an extent as can only be for purposes of warfare.

Spirituous liquors are equally dangerous,—introduced among the islanders, as they have been, too often it is said, to facilitate the labour bargains.

As the law at present stands, it is difficult to say how far interference by the commanders of Her Majesty's ships is safe; nor can I with propriety, while the question (arising out of the seizure of the 'Daphne') is pending, express any opinion on the subject. But this I may be permitted to point out, that all our Imperial legislation hitherto has been directed to the case of persons carried away as slaves, or for the purpose of being dealt with as slaves.

Can it be truly said that any of the islanders shipped in the 'Daphne,' for example, or in the 'Young Australian,' were such, or were to be dealt with as such?

They may scarcely have understood the contract which the shipowners assert that they entered into; or they may have been cajoled, or induced by falsehoods, or even threats, to signify assent.

But if the term of service really was limited (as in Queensland it must be by law, I believe), then, and especially if, in addition, wages were fixed and a return voyage guaranteed, how can the men be legally deemed slaves? The case of the 'Daphne,' no doubt, is peculiar; because

the men were (as it is said) induced to allow their destination from Queensland to Fiji, and the shipowner expected a profit for effecting the change. Possibly he was taking them to the latter place without their assent; but still, if they were there to be kept only for a few years, with stipulations for wages, what constituted them slaves within the meaning of the Statutes? This question is a very serious one, in reference not merely to the case of Captain Palmer now pending, but of other officers in Her Majesty's service, who, *with a knowledge of the scenes of wickedness which this trading among the South Sea Islands doubtless has induced, the blood-shedding and drunkenness, and kidnapping and treachery, not to mention the after ill-treatment, which occasionally attend it,* may think it a duty to follow in his steps.

It would seem that a Statute passed much more recently than the 5 Geo. IV. cap. 113, namely, in August 1839 (2 and 3 Vict. cap. 73), has been supposed to afford great facilities for the seizure and condemnation of slave-trading vessels. But if this was meant to extend beyond Portuguese traders, or at all events to British vessels, the enactments should have been so expressed. The difficulty, however, as to what constitutes a slave within the meaning of the Act would still recur; and I am anxious that the attention of the Home Government should be drawn to this difficulty, and therefore to the necessity of special legislation.

In all the discussions in this colony respecting the Queensland importations, the fact has been too generally forgotten that no law whatever exists against them, or against recruiting in the islands for them.

There is nothing illegal in any man, or set of men,

engaging, in any of these groups of islands, any number of labourers whom he may persuade to do so, to proceed for a term of years to a colony for reward, real or nominal, and there to continue working for that term. The Queensland Legislature, as it may be reasonably urged, interposed for the protection of these labourers by placing the shipping agents and the employers under restrictions. It is fairly debateable whether any Colonial Legislature has power to do more, and whether the trading itself shall be allowed to continue. But the mere fact that these regulations may have stimulated the trading, and thus indirectly tended to increase the evils inseparable from such a trade, seems to me most unjustly made matter of reproach to that Government; and it is quite possible that ultimately there may be advantages to the islanders, as well as the colony, following from these importations, and the return from time to time of the people, that as yet there has not been sufficient experience or opportunity to ascertain and realize.—I am, with apologies for intruding at this unintended length, yours, etc.

ALFRED STEPHEN.

P.S.—The simple provision that every islander taken on board, or there detained, for the purposes of deportation to any other island, without his assent (of which assent the proof should lie on the master and shipowner, or other person asserting such assent), should be deemed a slave within the Statutes, although the intention may really be to retain the man for a limited period only, and at wages, would be an effectual restriction on kidnapping and pretended assents. But the penalty in the Acts is very severe, and this is a hasty suggestion merely.

APPENDIX B.[1]

(Pp. 150, 151.)

VICE-ADMIRALTY COURT.

Friday, September 24, 1869.

Before his Honour Sir ALFRED STEPHEN, *Knight, C.B., Judge and Commissary.*

Re DAPHNE.

The argument in this case was heard yesterday. The Attorney-General and Mr. Davis were counsel for the Crown; Mr. Gordon (instructed by Messrs. Roxburgh, Slade, and Spain), for the respondents.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said there were only two main questions in this case—first, as to whether this ship was engaged in the carrying of persons as slaves, or for the purpose of dealing with them as slaves; and, second, supposing his Honour to be satisfied that the acts of the vessel did not come within the Statute, whether there was such a probable cause for seizure as to make it the duty of the Court to grant a certificate protecting the seizer from costs and action. He could not but admit that on the first point there was ground for uncertainty as to what view the Court would take; but the latter point did not seem to be open to discussion, the grounds for the action taken by the seizer being so much stronger than

[1] From the *Sydney Morning Herald.*

in any other case he could find. Having referred to the main facts in the proceedings of the vessel from the time of her departure from Melbourne till her arrival at Fiji, the learned counsel pointed out that the terms on which the natives left their islands were all in the hands of Charley, the only one who understood their language; so that, whether they were induced to leave by honestly telling them of advantages to be gained, or whether they were beguiled by plausible false pretexts, was not ascertained. Nor was it known whether force was used, for, although its use was denied, the Court had to depend for information as to this point on the statements of those who, as it were, belonged to the enemy's camp. The natives taken away were not in the colony; and, if they were, probably would not be eligible as witnesses. There was no pretence that the terms of any agreement were explained to them before reaching the ship, and when they were on board they would no longer be free agents. They could not get ashore again at their own islands without swimming, at the risk of their lives, from sharks, and they did not go ashore anywhere except at strange islands, where the people would be hostile to them, so that they were constrained to remain with the ship. They might have been well fed, and might have been pleased to be on board, but they might not have known that they were being taken away for three years, or perhaps for ever. Whatever explanation was given them, however, it seemed that they went through the form of an agreement to serve for three years, for £6 a year, and to be returned to their own islands at the end of the term. It was admitted by Pritchard that they would have no choice as to what men they should serve; and, supposing the agreement was

explained to them, Pritchard, Lewin, and the captain knew the agreement could not be enforced in Fiji, as it could have been in Queensland. Any explanation might satisfy these creatures, but the agreement could not be faithfully made with them unless at the time they had a *bona fide* intention to take the men to Queensland. There was no evidence to show that before they got to Tanna there was any agreement with fifty-six of these men, but there the hundred made a substitute engagement to go to Fiji. It was a suspicious circumstance that the whole body should thus suddenly have consented to this change. He could not understand it otherwise than by thinking they were helpless, and, recognising their true position, submitted. Admitting that the vessel, being licensed by the Queensland Government to carry fifty-one natives, was qualified to do so; if this were regarded in favour of the vessel, by a parity of reasoning it was to be taken against the vessel as having 107 on board. Whether the licensing of the vessel to carry that number was right or wrong, a man-of-war would not have a right to seize if she had authoritative papers from a civilized Government. In a heavy gale, when it was necessary to batten down the hatches, if these men were below they must be smothered; and if they were on the decks and about the rigging, it would be at the risk of many being swept overboard. There were *indicia* of a vessel being engaged in slave traffic, such as the carrying of extra water-tanks and cooking-stoves, yet they would not be so if other circumstances negatived the presumption that a vessel was so engaged, and he should not press that matter in this case.

His Honour.—All these *indicia*, no doubt, must be

thrown out of consideration in the case of a vessel engaged in a legitimate traffic.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL then proceeded to point out that whether the men were brought on board by fraud or force, and whether the agreements were truthfully or falsely explained to them, was all dependent upon Charley, no one else knowing the language, and none therefore being able to say whether he acted in good faith or otherwise. By a suspicious coincidence of ill-health, Charley and Lewin, when the 100 natives were on board at Tanna, left them to be taken to Fiji by Pritchard; and then it was broadly admitted that they were sent there, not for their own benefit, but for the advantage of those interested in the ship. The ship was in debt, and more could be obtained for them at Fiji than at Brisbane—so went the evidence. They were not to be consulted what masters they should serve, and although Pritchard might say he should require to know the people hiring them, it would be difficult to imagine that a consideration of this sort would be allowed to stand in the way of getting 5s. a head more for them. If it was explained to them, when they came on board, that the agreement to pay them wages, to feed, clothe, and lodge them, and return them in three years, would be enforced by law, as it would be if they went to Queensland, it must be apparent that they were deceived in changing the destination to Fiji, unless it were explained to them that in this place there was no legal guarantee that such conditions would be fulfilled. Lewin appointed Pritchard his agent, to dispose of these natives, and it was as complete a consignment of goods and chattels as one could well imagine. He now called attention to what constituted slavery. There was this diffi-

culty in the present case: the men were not being conveyed to a recognised slave country; but not only were they on board under circumstances which seemed to evince that they were not free agents, they were also being taken to a place where there was no guarantee that they would not be treated as slaves. He then cited the case of the 'Woodbridge' (before Lord Stowell), to enable the Court to say whether the present could be deemed a case of slavery. Passing to the grounds for seizure, the learned counsel contended that they put it beyond doubt that Captain Palmer was justified in his acts. On a matter of reasonable and probable cause, the information a person received always went to the question, because it naturally and properly operated upon his mind. At various islands called at by Captain Palmer he had repeatedly heard of Ross Lewin as a pirate and man-stealer, and when he found the 'Daphne,' with one hundred natives on board, running a contraband course contrary to the license, that the agreements were witnessed by interested parties, wrongly dated, and the dates not agreeing with those of the log, and that Ross Lewin's name was prominent in the transaction, there was strong outward evidence of slavery; and if Captain Palmer had failed to do what he did it would have been a gross dereliction of duty. Lord Stowell said nothing but the strong construction of strong enactments was capable of meeting the difficulty on account of the thousand artifices by which the slave traffic was covered. If Captain Palmer put a strong construction on the law, he ought to be protected by the certificate of the Court.

Mr. DAVIS urged that at the very time Lewin furnished himself with licenses from the Queensland Government,

he must have contemplated going directly in the face of them, and under cover of them doing what he was not authorized to do. As to the indebtedness of the ship being a ground for going to Fiji, it must be recollected that Lewin was only the charterer, and her liabilities d not affect him, but only the owners. It was an excus and if he knew it then he knew it when he left Brisban when he must have designed to get as much as he coul by taking the natives to some place other than Queens land. As to the application of the word slave, it was no necessary, in order to bring a person within the purview of the Statute, that he should be found in a way of dealing for the purposes of actual sale; it was quite sufficient t show conclusively that these natives were on board, n knowing what for, shipped for the purposes of Lewin, n their own, and being taken, whether they desired it o not, to Fiji. They were in servile subjection to him. It should have been left open to them, to the last moment, to withdraw from these alleged agreements. They were passed into a state of slavery, and the cloak of paying them in trade did not get rid of that position. Pritchard stated that if they refused to work under the employers he chose, he would not take them back to their islands. If the evidence did not establish conclusively that these natives were slaves, or intended to be dealt with as slaves, the circumstances at all events justified Captain Palmer in seizing the vessel in the execution of his duty. The learned counsel then cited the cases of the 'Warwick,' the 'Laura,' and the 'Ricardo Schmid' (Privy Council cases), to show the nature of the circumstances under which seizure had been held to be justifiable. If the Court did come to the conclusion that the vessel was not proved to have been

engaged in the slave trade, he maintained that Captain Palmer was entitled to the protection granted in the two first-named cases.

Mr. GORDON, on behalf of the owners and master, submitted, in reference to the question of conveying slaves, or persons intended to be dealt with as slaves, that the Court had no materials for supporting a condemnation. In that respect the whole case rested solely upon suspicion. There was no proof that the natives did not gladly go on board and contentedly remain there, and there was evidence that by all means of expression in their power they understood and gave assent to the agreements. The learned Attorney-General, however, would attribute the non-resistance to restraint, and the quietness to despair instead of content, although had there been resistance or expressions of dissatisfaction these signs would have also been used as evidence of a forced duress. Then as to the agreements, there was nothing but suspicion of wrong. If the natives understood what was told them, and they agreed to go for three years to Queensland, there was nothing to prevent them changing their minds and going to Fiji. As to the substituted agreements, the learned Attorney-General supposed the natives could do nothing else than sign them, being in a trap; but surely no ship was ever brought under the Slavery Act on any ground of that kind.

His HONOUR said he had formed the opinion that these men were not slaves in any sense of the word, or intended to be dealt with as slaves.

Mr. GORDON then proceeded to the question of probable cause for believing that they were intended to be dealt with as slaves. He showed that there were plantations

at Fiji owned by British subjects; that there was a demand for native labour there; that there was a recognised system of providing it; that many natives had been taken from the very same islands, whence most of these were obtained; and that the system was regulated as far as possible by the consul. The labour there was not of a slave character, and the 'Daphne' went into the harbour openly. She did not try to escape by passing the island, although the 'Rosario' was seen when she was many miles away. The master and Pritchard gave all the information in their power, and offered to allow the crew to be examined. There was nothing *per se* in the circumstances, or in the informalities in the papers, which attracted Captain Palmer's notice to lead him to the conclusion that she was a slaver. The question then was, Did Captain Palmer do all that was required of him to ascertain real grounds beyond suspicion that the vessel was engaged in a slave trade? Everything that was now known of her proceedings might then have been ascertained by him, but his opinion of Lewin seemed to have overbalanced his better judgment. On the question as to what should be admitted as a reasonable and probable cause entitling the seizer to the protective certificate of the Court, he cited the Privy Council cases of the 'Newport,' the 'Laura,' the 'Levin Lank,' and the 'Ricardo Schmidt.' In conclusion, he said it might be necessary that traffic of this kind should be watched with the greatest possible care, and it was a meritorious act on the part of any officer to see that there was no breach of the law; but this was no reason why foreigners or British subjects engaged in a legitimate traffic should have their property seized, to their damage and detriment, without compensation.

Mr. DAVIS, in reply, urged, that the cases cited by his learned friend were entirely distinguishable from this case, as being entirely unwarrantable seizures. He contended that Captain Palmer, knowing Lewin's character as a kidnapper, and finding him connected with a transaction irregular in all its details, formed a good ground for believing that Lewin was dealing with these natives as persons in a servile condition. As to the examination of persons on board the ship at Levuka, the evidence showed that inquiries by the consul were checked when an attempt was made to obtain information, and Pritchard would give no explanation of the antedating of the agreements. As to the vessel making no attempt to escape, Lieutenant Bingham said if she had passed the port they could have easily caught her. It was admitted by Pritchard, that if he had not obtained the price set upon the natives, he would have taken them back to Lewin. But what right to do so would he have as far as the natives themselves were concerned? The whole dealing with them was evidently as Ross Lewin chose, and for his own advantage. It was begging the whole question to say that, because this Court held they were not conveyed or dealt with as slaves, that therefore Captain Palmer ought to have known they were not slaves. He had ample grounds for the seizure, as the parties from the outset till the arrival at Fiji were violating the Act they pretended to be acting under.

In the course of the proceedings, Mr. WINDEYER (instructed by Messrs. Holdsworth and Brown) presented himself as counsel on behalf of the Queensland Government, and inquired if, in that capacity, he had any *locus standi* before the Court.

His HONOUR could not say that he had any *locus standi*, the parties he represented not being interested in the case. It was not intended to implicate the Queensland Government. He had no hesitation in saying that, as far as he had been able to judge of the administration of their Act, rather than deserving the censure heaped upon them elsewhere, they deserved high credit. People had a right to import this labour; and it was a lawful trade, although injuries might arise from it. The Queensland Government, however, had done all in their power to see it so managed that as little injury as possible should result from it, and that the natives should be protected in every way.

Mr. Windeyer said the Queensland Government merely wished to show that they were in no way concerned in countenancing anything like slavery.

His Honour observed, that it would be utterly inconsistent with the first principles of justice to say anything against a party that was not represented.

His HONOUR having given his decision against the charge of slaving, postponed his decision on the question of a certificate protecting the appellant from costs and action. He will give a written judgment; but as he proceeds at once on circuit, the release of the vessel, the decision as to certificate, and the preparation of the judgment, will have to be prepared during his absence from town.

COURT OF VICE-ADMIRALTY.

Before his Honour SIR ALFRED STEPHEN, *Judge.*

November 12, 1869.

THE QUEEN ON THE PROSECUTION OF COMMANDER GEORGE PALMER AGAINST THE SCHOONER 'DAPHNE.'

HIS Honour gave judgment in this case as follows:—

This is a suit instituted substantially by Captain Palmer of H.M.S. 'Rosario,' in order to procure the condemnation of the vessel above named, seized by him at Ovalau, one of the Fiji Islands, under the Acts relating to the Abolition of the Slave Trade, for a breach of those laws —she being (or the promovent supposing her to be) at the time engaged in that base traffic. The evidence in the case having been taken before me on several days, sitting in open Court, the matter was finally argued on the last day but one of the last term; when I pronounced orally a judgment in favour of the respondents—my reasons for which I am now about to deliver. Since that day, I have intimated my intention to grant Captain Palmer a certificate under the Statute that he nevertheless had, under the circumstances, probable cause for making the seizure.

The facts of the case, as abundantly shown by the evidence, and respecting the main portion of which, indeed, there was no room for contest, are those which follow. The 'Daphne' belonged to persons in Melbourne; two of whom, in April 1868, went in her on a cruise among the islands lying to the north and north-east of New Caledonia, with the design ultimately of establishing a settlement on

one of them. Among these owners was a Mr. Pritchard, whose fellow-voyager, the sole registered owner, remained eventually at Tanna, in the group of the New Hebrides—both forming stations in that island as cotton planters. There they chartered the vessel to one Ross Lewin, who was (or said that he was) engaged in obtaining labourers for Queensland—natives of those islands or others in the neighbourhood—for a voyage or voyages to that colony; the hirer and her owners to share equally the profits. In August 1868, Lewin sailed from the New Hebrides in the 'Daphne' accordingly, with fifty natives of the islands, for Brisbane, the Queensland capital, where they were landed.

I had no evidence, and the present inquiry called for none, as to the disposal of that particular body of men in the colony; but it is notorious, almost a matter of history, that natives of various islands in this ocean have, for several years past, been brought thence into Queensland, and there employed as labourers on the farms of the settlers. Much controversy has arisen respecting the treatment of these men; the mode in which they have been obtained—whether by fraud or even force; whether they have understood, or could be made to understand, the nature of the contracts made (or represented to be made) with them, and whether those contracts, if in fact generally made, are faithfully performed by the employers—especially the stipulation always said to be entered into, that the labourers shall after a short period be returned to their homes. But it has never been asserted (it was certainly not asserted in this case, still less attempted to be shown) that the natives thus taken to Queensland—or any of those taken at any time to the Fiji Islands, where the

settlers have of late years employed labourers similarly obtained—were put or kept to labour except under some such contract; entitling them to food, clothing, and wages, and, after a service of two or three years, to a free passage back to their own country. The difficulty, and, in a country like the Fijis, having no regular government, the impossibility of enforcing such contracts must be obvious. The fact, however, proved incontestably before me, that such stipulations were generally understood to exist, and that in repeated instances, both in the Fiji Islands and Queensland, native labourers have been taken back in pursuance of the stipulation, is all-important on the question of *slavery*. That is to say, in the present case, whether natives found on board this British vessel at the Fijis, under alleged agreements of the character here indicated, were brought there (however irregularly or improperly) as labourers for hire and for a limited term of service, or were really slaves, or intended to be disposed of and dealt with as slaves.

In Queensland, the Legislature has commendably placed this kind of trading, so far as it was within their jurisdiction, under very stringent regulations. It is scarcely necessary to observe, that there is nothing unlawful in engaging labouring men in the South Sea Islands, for purposes of colonization, and taking them to a British colony or elsewhere, any more than there would be in bringing men with the same object from Germany or Holland. Many reasons of humanity or of policy may make it desirable, and in a high degree to restrict—possibly to prohibit—certainly to regulate and watch over a traffic so liable to abuse, and so full of danger. But this is a matter for imperial legislation alone, and the question

has more than one aspect. The Queensland Government probably thought that the pursuits of civilized life might be beneficial to these savages, and ultimately to their race, equally as to their employers. Whatever opinion may be formed on these points, the fact is that the Queensland Legislature in March 1868 passed a Statute by which the importation of Polynesian labourers is permitted to licensed persons only, and in approved vessels; forms of contract with the people, to be entered into by their employers in the colony, are provided, and there are sundry enactments for compelling its performance, and the due return of the men home after a stipulated period.

Under that Statute, Ross Lewin obtained three separate licenses in January 1869, for the bringing to Brisbane (in the whole) of fifty labourers; the 'Daphne' having previously been inspected, and her fittings and accommodation for that number approved of. In February 1869 he returned, thus authorized, to Tanna, having on board twenty-seven natives going back to their own islands, together with a quantity of supplies for Mr. Pritchard and the other part owner. Of those twenty-seven returning natives, one named Beppo had been in Queensland three years; but, after visiting Erromanga and Sandwich Island (more properly Vaté), where he was to have been left with the others, he preferred to remain in the ship—and he was examined, as also were two natives from Maré and Lefou, as a witness for the defence. Mr. Pritchard went in the vessel, ostensibly as supercargo, to the several islands where natives were obtained by Lewin—Erromanga, Vaté, Star Island, Gana, Amotalava, and others. At each of these a boat's crew of five went ashore, or close to the surf on the beach; and parleyed (or seemed to parley)

with the natives, who were generally swimming about alongside. All the five were natives of one or other of the numerous islands or islets with which those latitudes are studded, and three were witnesses in the case. Only one of the five, however, understood, or is supposed to have understood, the language of the several engaged men; and he was one Charley Murra—who, not proceeding to Ovalau, was inaccessible as a witness on either side. What really was said to the men by this Charley, therefore, who acted as interpreter throughout, explaining or seeming to explain to them the agreements which were afterwards signed, cannot certainly be known. But Mr. Pritchard swore, and I saw no reason to doubt his testimony, that Charley appeared to explain the agreements intelligibly; that the men seemed to understand what he said, and indicated plainly their assent; he (Pritchard) moreover having himself some knowledge of the language, though slight, and being able to converse a little in it. However this may be, all the witnesses said that every one who was engaged came off to the vessel willingly; that after hearing Charley, some came and some went away; that no force or threat (so far as the witnesses could judge) was in any instance used, either before the men embarked or afterwards; and that on board all freely walked about, or otherwise acted as they pleased, and seemed perfectly happy and contented. These witnesses were:—Mr. Pritchard himself, Daggett the master, Foster the mate, Paterson the steward,—Lifou Dick, Beppo, already mentioned, and Kouma, three of the boat's crew,—and Fangai or Johnny Mare the cook; all these natives speaking English, and two of them men of considerable intelligence, being able to read and write.

In the whole, between the 6th and the 19th March Lewin obtained 107 natives; and with these the schooner sailed first to Sandwich Island, where they remained until the 24th. The authorized number for Queensland, as we have seen, was 50 only. The others, Pritchard said, were to be left at Tanna (at which the 'Daphne' would in due course touch on her way), there to remain until the vessel's return from Brisbane, when these also, it was expected, would be prepared and allowed to follow.

On the 28th March, the 'Daphne' arrived at Tanna; where seven of the men desired or were persuaded to remain. At this time agreements in the prescribed Queensland form had been signed by the 50 only—or, it appears, whether accidentally or by design, by 51. All these documents, in five sets, were dated alike, and executed on the 14th March—being *about* the actual date of hiring, real or supposed. They were not in fact prepared until some days after the hiring; although Daggett at first said, that they were executed by eight or ten of the natives, and sometimes ten or twelve at a time, at sea, according to the number from time to time engaged. Both he and Mr. Pritchard concurred in stating that the agreements were thus explained to the men, as opportunity offered; but, beyond all doubt, the agreements were not signed until about the 19th or 20th. Each agreement is of the same tenor: the term of service three years; wages, food, and clothing, so much; and a return voyage at the end of that period. But, until their arrival at Tanna, the agreements with the fifty-six or supernumerary men were verbal only.

Up to that time it appears,—or it was sworn by Mr. Pritchard, and in effect by Daggett,—there was no idea entertained of a change in the destination of the vessel.

But the partners had incurred debts at Brisbane; and they were led to believe that they could get a much larger profit (that is to say, a more liberal rate per head of passage-money) by taking all the men at once to Ovalau, where labour was greatly in demand. The average length of passage to the Fijis was a fortnight less, and 100 men could be carried there—notwithstanding the crowding; whereas the vessel would not be allowed, by its license, to convey more than 50 in one trip to Queensland. All the natives, therefore, were asked their consent, through Charley Murra, to the substitution of those islands for Brisbane; and, on such assent being given, or declared to have been given, four agreements were prepared (called by the witnesses re-engagements), dated the 9th, 12th, 14th, and 16th March. These writings, after explanation, it was said, were signed by the 100 men,—in groups, according to their islands, apparently,—binding them to serve employers in the Fijis for three years, at a stipulated rate of wages; the latter finding them return passages to the islands mentioned, at the termination of those years. On the 31st March the 'Daphne' sailed; but, meeting with adverse winds, did not arrive at Levuka, the principal settlement in Ovalau, until the 21st April. There, unfortunately for all pecuniarily interested in the vessel, her Majesty's ship 'Rosario' lay at anchor; and the 'Daphne' was seized as a slaver.

The interpreter Charley, who had a wife and children at Tanna (as I collect), on the cotton plantation of Mr. Smith, Pritchard's partner, was left behind at that island. So was Ross Lewin; who is said to have been ill, and anxious to remain behind. He had indeed necessarily no longer anything to do with the Polynesians, having

abandoned his connexion with the Queensland contracts. But he had a continuing interest in the speculation; for by the charter-party, or the arrangement connected with it, he was (as I collect) to have half the profits, whatever they might be, arising from it. And all the agreements, accordingly, purport to be with Lewin, or those to whom they may consign them; although the men are not in terms bound to serve him personally, but "employers in the Fijis" only —presumably by assignment from him. The Queensland form, in like manner, makes the hiring that of the licensed agent; but the service stipulated is, to "various employers," in the colony. Mr. Pritchard, going in the vessel, and there taking personal charge of the natives, had a written authority jointly from his co-partner, and from Lewin, to act as their agent in all matters connected with the 'Daphne;' and from Lewin alone to act as the latter's agent, in the "disposition" of the "native labourers" on board her—to whom, says the document (meaning of course to Pritchard), *I consign them.*

It seems strange that these two papers, without which it was obvious that Mr. Pritchard could have done nothing, either with the vessel or the men, should not have been at once shown to Captain Palmer, with the other documents, which were all unreservedly given up to that officer. They were found on Pritchard's person, when arrested here in Sydney. The omission was commented on, as indicating—from the terms used in the second paper,—that the natives were really considered, and dealt with, as *cargo* merely. But it appears to me that the expression "consign" has been made too much of. No one supposes that this traffic in labour springs from any other motive than the desire of gain. Every employer seeks for labourers with

primarily no higher object; although he may believe that the people introduced will eventually benefit themselves and the country, in an equal or greater degree. He looks out for an agent, therefore, to procure for him the labourers required; and the charge of this person is, or may be, so much per head. The shipowner, advertising for immigrants, makes and also pays a similar charge. In the present case, an illiterate man (obviously so, and sworn to be so) obtains labourers, possibly by no very scrupulous means, for any persons or person that may be willing to employ them. He contracts with the former, that they shall work for him or his assigns; and his charge to the employer, the assignee, is a high rate of passage-money. If we spoke of such immigrants as imported, or such labourers as consigned, we should not thereby alter the nature of the operation. I am not advocating the system, and am far from saying that better and more precautionary measures, even by colonial legislation, might not be adopted to protect this Polynesian race. I censure as strongly as any man the taking of these one hundred natives a voyage of twenty days, cooped up at night in a cabin less than thirty feet by sixteen; where they lay on shelves, the space between which was 2 feet 9 inches, or, above the highest, 26 inches only, to the deck beams. The result being, in one instance, an injury to the limbs of a lad, apparently eighteen, that may be incurable. But all this did not constitute the people *slaves;* and, on the evidence before me,—there being nothing to contradict that which I have stated, and nothing to show that labourers are, or ever were, dealt with at Ovalau as slaves,—my conclusion is that these men were not such, and were not intended to be disposed of as such.

Ovalau, no doubt, like the other islands of that group, has no settled form of government. The native inhabitants are uncivilized and heathens. It has however, and for many years has had, a resident British consul, and a large body of European residents—planters, cultivating a considerable portion of the soil. All British vessels report to the consul; and it appears to have been usual to refer to him on all questions connected with immigrant labourers, for the protection of the people. The planters readily employ these men, it appears, from all the islands, and willingly pay from £4 to £5 a head for the cost of bringing them. In the Fijis, the same kind of food grows as in the New Hebrides; the climate, and the absence of clothing, are in both groups the same; and it is certain that, in March 1869, there were many natives in the latter, especially in Tanna, who knew Ovalau well, and what might be expected there. Captain Palmer admitted that these immigrants ("all, or most of them,") receive wages, as he understood, and are engaged usually for two or three years; although the consul complained that he generally could not get their employers to send the men back. William Oliver, a sailmaker, examined as a witness for the Crown, said that he had seen very many native immigrants in the Fijis, and knew of a great number being sent home; that he never heard of any ill-treatment of them, or of any being transferred from one master to another; but that he knew instances where the men could not get away, though their time had long expired. He believed that all agreements with imported labourers were made before the consul. Mr. Joseph Wilson, a planter and merchant, called for the defence, declared that he and his father had repeatedly en-

gaged natives at Ovalau, from various islands (Rotumah and Tanna, for instance, and the Penrhyn Islands), who had after working a few years been sent to their homes. In particular, he stated that thirty men from Tanna, after one year's service, returned eighteen months ago, and twenty-five from Rotumah, after a like term, were sent home four years ago. He mentioned also fifty-nine, who were on the point of returning when he left Levuka, after serving two years and a half. He knew personally of a Mr. Hennings having taken home between twenty and thirty natives, three months ago. All his own agreements were made in the consul's presence; and he believes that in every batch of immigrants there are always some who can explain matters to the others.

A good deal of evidence was given in support of the seizure, to show, what nobody disputed, that the 'Daphne' was fitted up for numerous passengers; and so had some of the indications of a slaver, specified in the 2d and 3d Vict. c. 73, s. 4. But that enactment, as I explained at the hearing, supposing it to apply at all in a case of this kind, was passed in respect of vessels found in very different latitudes, and under very different circumstances, from those in question here. On various parts of the coast of Africa, from which negro slaves were brought, and of the coasts of America to which they were usually taken, a vessel occasionally was discovered having not one single slave, or the traces of one, on board, yet with fittings up, and quantities and kinds of food, showing unmistakably her employment,—that human beings, and presumably negroes, had been or were to be her cargo. Passengers of any kind, in the ordinary sense, did not exist in those regions. The Legislature therefore made the possession

of such food and fittings evidence,—until the inference should be rebutted,—but only until then,—that the vessel was engaged in slave-trading. But it is absurd to imagine that the enactment was intended or could operate to compel a Court, against the strongest evidence, and in violation of the truth, to pronounce a trading vessel in these seas a slaver, because she had on board, with the necessary fittings, an improper number of passengers; they being free labourers, expressly engaged as such, although copper-coloured, and naked, as is their wont,—whom she was taking to a country where immigrants of that kind, fed on yams and maize and bananas, are proved to be employed solely for wages, with limited terms of service.

Everything that has been said respecting the Queensland contracts, and the intended taking of the fifty Polynesians to that colony,—if the intention ever existed,—might perhaps have been omitted from this judgment, and from the case, had not the irregularities connected with both been dwelt on, as justifying, if not altogether the seizure, yet the suspicion of foul play. I do not doubt that Ross Lewin originally and to a late period intended to return to Brisbane, and with the fifty labourers; and I see no sufficient reason for imputing fraud to any party, except on his employers there, or the creditors who fitted out the ship, in the changing of that destination. But the suddenness of that change, and the circumstances connected with it,—the irregularities alluded to, his own absence and that of his interpreter, the fact that his only authorized and declared purpose was to obtain fifty labourers, and those for a colony from which, when detained by Captain Palmer, the vessel had sailed in an exactly opposite direction, her crowded state, with twice the number of

natives on board that she was reasonably able to carry,—all these things inevitably excited suspicion and distrust, and excused that officer's belief that these ignorant savages had never in fact, consciously, if at all, entered into the agreements produced to him, but that they had been trepanned or kidnapped:—that Ovalau, or at all events Levuka, was not the vessel's real or ultimate destination, but that some other of those islands was probably contemplated; that the Queensland licenses and contracts were only contrivances to cover that design; and that, in short, the object was to sell the men, if not at Ovalau, yet elsewhere (but *there* if practicable), into slavery. I therefore grant to Captain Palmer a certificate under the Statute in that behalf, that he had a "probable cause" for the seizure and prosecution of this vessel.

I have spoken of the Queensland form of contract, as the one entered into or signed by these natives. But in strictness, the Polynesian Labourers Act requires from the men themselves no writing, and from the hiring agent the use of no particular form. The expression nevertheless is substantially accurate, and conveys exactly my meaning. No clause of the Statute, in terms, prescribes the conditions of the original hiring; and the contract may therefore be oral only, and entered into, or formally ratified and witnessed, apparently, at any time. But, on arrival at Brisbane, the master of every vessel with immigrants is to produce a *certificate*, signed by a "consul, missionary, or other known person," that the labourers have voluntarily engaged themselves, and with "a full understanding of the nature and conditions" of their agreements. And this certificate, the form of which is given, embodies in effect the contract eventually required;

which the natives are supposed (verbally or otherwise) to have already entered into. Ross Lewin, mistaking the provision, or misled by the printed form, which has a blank line for the agent's and for an interpreter's signature with other lines subjoined, adopted this as the contract itself; and accordingly affixed his own signature, followed by the names and marks of the natives, severally;—Charley Murra as the "chief interpreter," and Mr. Pritchard with Foster the mate as "known persons," adding their signatures also.

APPENDIX C.

(Page 165.)

The *Queensland Express* of the 30th ultimo contains copies of a couple of important despatches received from the Secretary of State for the Colonies by Governor Blackall. Sir Frederick Rogers, writing on the 29th April last, on behalf of Earl Granville, remarks that attention has been called to a paragraph in a Sydney paper, on the subject of Polynesian immigrants in Queensland, and intimates that the Secretary of State would wish to be informed what is known of Mr. Ross Lewin, and of the immigrants brought by him to Queensland in the ship 'Spunkie.' "The Secretary of State is aware (writes Sir Frederick) that the law of the colony makes the best practicable provision for requiring that immigrants should not be introduced except by persons who had obtained a license from Government, and had executed a bond which made them amenable to the Government in case the immigrants are shown to be kidnapped, or treated otherwise than as provided by law; but he should be glad to be informed of the course pursued by the Executive in giving effect to this law—who practically issues licenses—whether any inquiry is made into the character of the persons applying for such licenses? What inquiry is instituted

into the state of the immigrant ship on its arrival, and the history of the voyage? Whether any complaints have been made? And whether any masters of vessels have been subjected to any penalties for violation of the conditions prescribed by their bond, or by the law of the colony?

"As this immigration," he adds, "is the subject of much comment in the mother country, it concerns the Colonial Government to furnish the Secretary of State with full information as to the mode in which it is carried on."

The following despatch from Earl Granville had been written a few days prior to the above :—

"DOWNING STREET, 23*d April* 1869.

"SIR,—I have addressed you in another despatch respecting the immigration of South Sea Islanders into Queensland. I now enclose extracts from two newspapers [(1) *Times*, Wednesday, April 21, par. 4, column 5. (2) *Leeds Mercury*, Friday, April 16, par. 2, columns 6, 7] bearing on the same subject, which have been subsequently brought under my notice.

"I have, of course, no means of judging what credit is to be attached to the statements contained in these extracts. They derive some weight, however, from the circumstance that definite facts are alleged, and certain persons are quoted as making themselves directly or indirectly responsible for representations as to the mischief arising from the immigration.

"The persons quoted are the Bishop of Sydney, Bishop Patteson, the Rev. J. P. Sunderland, and the Rev.

John Graham. The specific allegations relate, in part, to the mode in which the people are treated in Queensland; in part to some transactions which appear to have taken place among the South Sea Islands, but which are not, on their face, connected with the Queensland Emigration.

"Probably the same and other facts have been brought before the Council and the Assembly of Queensland, in petitions which appear to have been addressed to them by a meeting held at Sydney. I anticipate that before you receive this despatch you will have communicated to me copies of those petitions, and will have given me an account of the steps which are taken in consequence of them. But I wish you clearly to remember that this matter is not a mere Queensland question; it is a matter affecting foreign, though uncivilized, countries, and the honour of the British name in connexion with them. It is a matter in which Her Majesty's Government feel the deepest interest, and in respect of which you, as their officer, are under the most serious responsibility.

"It is for you to take care that the home Government is not misled, but receives accurate and full information respecting what is going on in Queensland; and to use your utmost influence to secure that the immigrants receive, in relation to their employers, that special protection which immigrant labourers receive in other colonies to which coloured immigrants (as they are called) proceed, and without which they must be at the mercy of those about them.

"I trust to you for giving your immediate and serious

attention to the matter in order that Her Majesty's Government may be in a position to vindicate the character of the colony if these abuses do not exist; or to take such steps as may be necessary for putting a stop to the immigration, if they do.—I have, &c.,

"GRANVILLE.

"Governor Blackall," etc.

APPENDIX D.

(Page 181.)

To the Honourable the Legislative Assembly of Queensland, in Parliament assembled,

The Memorial of the Citizens of Brisbane, in Public Meeting assembled, at the School of Arts, North Brisbane, on the eighth day of March, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-nine,

Humbly Sheweth,—

That your memorialists, regarding with satisfaction the policy of the mother country in the abolition of slavery in her own colonies, in endeavouring to obtain the suppression of the slave-trade, and in using her influence and power to secure for the weak and unprotected races of mankind the enjoyment of freedom, view with serious apprehension the system of importing South Sea Islanders as labourers into Queensland, as a step in the direction of slavery.

That your memorialists are further of opinion that "The Polynesian Labourers Act of 1868," now in operation, has failed to accomplish the declared intent of that enactment, and that it is powerless to prevent abuses which arise from the traffic in South Sea Islanders, whilst it also fails to prevent deception, both in the manner of

obtaining labourers, and in the mode of entering into agreements alleged to be binding on them.

That your memorialists, rejoicing at the great success which has attended the efforts of missionaries to introduce Christianity and civilisation into the islands of the Southern Ocean, deprecate the deportation of the natives from their homes to a strange land, where they are severed from all domestic ties, and deprived of Christian instruction, as calculated to prove disastrous in its effects, not only on the moral and religious progress of the natives, but also destructive of the labours of the missionaries in the islands; that the system of importing males only is unnatural, cruel, and subversive of domestic relations, and calculated to produce a vicious influence not only upon the men who are brought away, but also upon their families, who, bereft of their natural protectors, are left behind in the islands; that the practice which prevails extensively in this trade of bringing from those islands, which are wholly uncivilized, men who are still savages and cannibals, and who are incapable of understanding the nature of a legal contract, is so repugnant to the principles on which immigration should be conducted, and is so clearly a development of the slave-trade, that it should be strictly prohibited.

Your memorialists also consider that the introduction of an inferior and uncivilized race into this colony, to supplant British and European labourers, is totally subversive of the constitutional principles on which this colony has been founded, and will reduce to a state of inactivity and destitution thousands of the working classes, who have been induced to emigrate to Queensland in the hope of finding here an independent home and permanent employment, and will have the effect of checking emigration from

Europe, and of thus retarding indefinitely the settlement of the colony; that this system is detrimental to the material advancement and the healthy development of the industrial resources of this colony, and to the moral and social well-being of our community, while it is also opposed to those principles of political economy which form the true basis of national prosperity.

Your memorialists would therefore respectfully submit that it would be wise on the part of your Honourable House, looking on the general welfare of the colony, to repeal "The Polynesian Labourers Act of 1868," to abolish the traffic, and to cause to be returned to their respective homes the natives who have been brought here.

Your memorialists humbly pray that it may please your Honourable House to take the foregoing representations into your serious consideration, and that you will take measures to put an end to the traffic hereinbefore alluded to, and to repeal the "Polynesian Labourers Act of 1868."

And your memorialists, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

(Signed in the name and by the authority of the meeting.)

JOHN HARDGRAVE,
Mayor of Brisbane, Chairman.

BRISBANE, 30*th March* 1869.

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